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efforts and aid in Haiti

State Magazine interviews
Secretary of State John Kerry

Re-engaging with an estranged neighbor



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On the cover

As dusk settles over Cuba, a fisherman casts his line off an old section of seawall lining the Malecón.

Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco

Traffic zips past Iglesia de San Francisco de Paula, a 17th century Catholic chapel that is part of the Old Havana UNESCO World Heritage Site. *Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco*

STATE MAGAZINE



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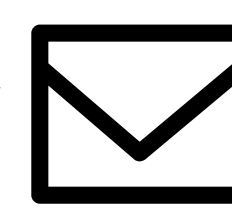
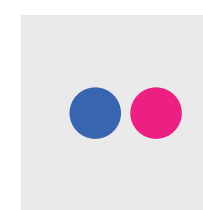
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During the Embassy Kabul drill, an emergency response staff member paints a “wound” onto one of the volunteers in the exercise.

Photo by Nathan Cooper

Kabul Conducts Casualty Drill

On Oct. 29, Embassy Kabul’s emergency response apparatus snapped into action, as its network of medics, special agents, bomb technicians and other stakeholders heard their radios order: “Drill, drill, drill!” Conducted on a workday, the three-hour mass casualty drill for first responders and security teams followed two months of planning by the embassy and adjacent NATO Resolute Support Mission headquarters. The simulation involved more than 400 multinational volunteer participants, who treated 37 “casualties” bedecked in chillingly realistic makeup, and used more than 12 embassy and military helicopters to transport them to more advanced trauma facilities on neighboring bases.

“This was by far the largest and most complex drill I have worked on,” said Regional Security Officer Carlos Matus. The planning was coordinated by the RSO’s Emergency Planning Unit and involved roughly 85 individuals representing 38 agencies and sections across the embassy and Resolute Support. The drill helped the agencies “see how we could cooperate, communicate and ultimately save lives in a very real scenario,” said Regional Medical Officer Dr. Lawrence Gernon.

The RSO and RMO teams collaborated in the planning and execution of the event and learned several valuable lessons on communications. “I was very impressed by how we overcame language barriers, with English, Turkish, Georgian and Macedonian personnel (from Resolute Support) in the mix,” Matus observed. “Something as simple as trying to get an injured person through a gate can be challenging with a language barrier, but we were able to overcome those problems very quickly.”

Dr. Gernon added, “No matter how many times you drill, the greatest vulnerability is always communications, and that is why we continue to build redundancies into the system.” ▣



Ambassador Jane Hartley, at front, poses with, at rear, former NBA stars Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, center, and Robert Horry, right, along with local girls and boys at the opening of a renovated Parisian public basketball court.

Photo by Sylvain de Gelder

Mission France Uses Sports Diplomacy

In 2016, Mission France's sports diplomacy efforts encompassed tennis and basketball, softball, roller derby and sailing, all to engage hundreds of low-income youths on such values as gender equality, tolerance, inclusivity and self-reliance, and to help counter radicalization. One mission activity was the refurbishment of tennis and basketball courts in underserved neighborhoods inside and outside Paris, an effort inaugurated by several American sports legends, including former tennis star Martina Navratilova and NBA legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. The effort gave more than 1,000 girls and boys safe places to practice and was widely reported in the media, gaining the mission meaningful relationships with its counterparts in Paris and regional city halls. Private sector partners, including the NBA, Nike, Spalding and other corporations, financed the renovations.

Outside of Paris, the mission worked with American Presence Posts and consulates to engage youth around France through such means as a speaker tour focusing on girls' empowerment and equal access to sports. American softball player Megan Willis held meetings and clinics in Paris, Lyon and Bordeaux. The French Federation of University Sports is now developing a strategy to integrate softball and baseball into schools' intramural sports and physical education curriculum.

In another initiative, the mission sponsored France's pre-eminent roller derby champion in an effort to involve young women in that unique American sport through the Global Sports Mentoring program. Also, following American skipper Rich Wilson's participation in the Vendée Globe solo round-the-world yacht race, the public affairs, section worked with the ministry of education to secure its support for a comprehensive STEM education program for French middle schoolers.

In 2017, Mission France will focus on sports diplomacy initiatives in Marseille, a city where radicalization runs deep, and where American boxers will conduct clinics and engage young athletes. ■



Consul General Vajda, right, presents a gift to Madhya Pradesh state's chief minister at the Global Investors Summit after a meeting with U.S. companies. *Photo by Gregory Taevs*

CG Visits Indian Trade Conference

In India, a growing nation where half the population is under 25, most international attention focuses on major cities. However, India's heartland is expected to see the fastest growth in the future, and the heartland state of Madhya Pradesh, part of Consulate General Mumbai's 280-million-people district, is actively seeking to become a hub for businesses wanting to reach the whole country.

Taking note of this, Consul General Tom Vajda of Consulate General Mumbai led a delegation of U.S. businesses to the Global Investors Summit held in Madhya Pradesh's business center, Indore. Meeting with the state's Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, representatives of such U.S. companies as John Deere, Procter & Gamble, and Cummins Technologies discussed issues with their existing factories, and a representative of UST Global described its future investments in the state. Representatives of other U.S. companies discussed potential investments.

Vajda applauded the state's government for its efforts to draw investment, as demonstrated through its being ranked fifth among Indian states in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business index. "We stand ready to support U.S. businesses seeking further opportunities here," he said.

The Madhya Pradesh per capita GDP lags the national average, but several years of above-average growth have helped the state begin to catch up. Attendees at the Global Investors Summit were also optimistic about the opportunities for increased U.S. investment and trade. For instance, an Indian soybean importer described increasing imports from U.S. farmers, with support from the Foreign Agricultural Service. ■



Joined by Pate Marine Community Conservancy rangers and local officials, Ambassador Godec cuts the ribbon to dedicate a new USAID-funded boat and engine that will enable more effective marine patrols of the Kenyan coast.

Photo by Sophie Harrison

Ambassador Visits Kenyan Coast

Ambassador Robert Godec visited the Kenyan community of Lamu Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the Pate Island off the Kenyan coast in early November to show the U.S. commitment to Kenya. It was the first overnight trip by a U.S. ambassador to Lamu County since 2010. Post employees' travel to the area has been restricted since 2014.

Embassy Nairobi has historically focused significant U.S. assistance in Lamu, including for environment, health and education programs, and programs to counter violent extremism.

Godec also cut the ribbon on a renovated Lamu American Space, which offers an array of programming for old and young, and is even used by the Lamu County governor for meeting constituents. At the 16th annual Lamu Cultural Festival, supported by an embassy grant, the ambassador waved the starting flag for a race of lanteen-sail wooden boats that are otherwise used for fishing or trading, a festival highlight.

Godec also launched a new USAID program at Pate Conservancy, part of a \$20 million partnership with the Northern Rangelands Trust that covers 10.8 million acres, and handed over a new USAID-funded patrol boat that conservancy rangers will use to enforce fishing regulations in the marine protected areas. ■

Direct from the D.G.

ARNOLD CHACON
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE



MSI and QSI Reform: Rewarding Superior Performance and Creating a Culture of Excellence

In December, we announced important changes to the Department's performance recognition programs for both the Foreign Service and Civil Service as part of our strategy to drive excellence and results. Reforming Foreign Service Meritorious Step Increases (MSIs) and Civil Service Quality Step Increases (QSIs) will increase consistency, equity and transparency. Greater uniformity will help ensure we reward outstanding work and promote a Department-wide performance-based culture. We have two distinct personnel systems, but we are one team with one mission, to advance our nation's interests and values in a complex world. Success comes more easily when all employees are motivated, engaged and inspired to perform at the highest levels. Like the Foreign Service performance management reforms implemented over the past year and new initiatives for the Civil Service the MSI and QSI changes motivate, engage and inspire by recognizing and rewarding high performing employees.

To ensure equity and equal access, the MSI program will now be open to all eligible Foreign Service career employees yearly; it is a nomination-based, peer-reviewed competitive awards process involving the Department's MSI Awards panels. The criteria for eligibility and nomination, outlined in the Procedural Precepts for Foreign Service Meritorious Service Increase Panels, were negotiated with AFSA last fall. Unlike a promotion, which is forward looking and assesses an employee's potential, the MSI is based solely on performance and/or service. Open season for nominations will run from April 15 to June 15, Bureau-level committees will review and forward their best nominations to the Department MSI generalist and specialist panels, which will meet in the fall to consider nominations and make recommendations. Each panel will consist of five Foreign Service members, following established best practices to ensure diversity and transparency, mirroring the FS Selection Boards. By creating a specific MSI program that is not linked to the promotion process, we will greatly increase the pool of eligible employees and ensure that all those who demonstrated exceptionally meritorious service are considered for a performance-based salary increase.

Likewise, the changes to the QSI program will enhance transparency, uniformity and fairness for the Civil Service and align with the annual performance-evaluation process to reward superior performance. Centralizing the decision-making process allows us to apply clear, consistent criteria throughout the Department by employing diverse peer review panels, drawn from across the Department, in which employees review colleagues with similar types of positions and grades. The Department-wide competition for QSIs will further the development of a performance-based culture of excellence.

As part of the reforms, we've also introduced a new Department-level performance-based cash award for those ineligible for a QSI because they are at the top step of their grade or subject to a pay-cap. It makes sense to allow these employees to compete, receive a cash-award and gain the same Department-wide recognition for their accomplishments that their colleagues receiving QSIs are afforded. Employees receiving MSIs and QSIs will be recognized in Departmental notices, in addition to any Bureau-level awards presentations.

These changes are a result of your input, whether provided through the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey or more directly, and the recognition that preparing our workforce for the future requires common-sense changes that empower and motivate our people to do their best and deliver superior outcomes. The success of these new programs requires active participation by Foreign Service and Civil Service employees. We'll be reaching out to you directly via various forums and welcome your continued feedback.

Meantime, I wish you and your loved ones a healthy and happy 2017! ■

Arnold A. Chacon

Diversity Notes

JOHN M. ROBINSON
OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS



Saluting the 2016 Award Winners

Diversity is one of the core values of the Department's strategic plan to build a 21st century workforce. Not just a worthy cause, diversity is an operational necessity. Those recently chosen as the winner and runner-up for the 2016 EEO Award brilliantly reflected this commitment in specific programs as well as in their daily work.

The recipient of the Department's 2016 EEO Award, William B. Gannon, former regional security officer (RSO) at the U.S. Embassy in Santiago, was selected for promoting equal opportunity within the embassy workforce, as well as in U.S.-Chile bilateral law enforcement relations. In reviewing Chile's National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, he saw an opportunity to promote greater gender equality in law enforcement. He also invited the president of the group Women in Federal Law Enforcement (WIFLE) to Chile for a public outreach event with six Chilean law enforcement, defense and education institutions.

This program helped the embassy raise awareness of women's equality—a key U.S. foreign policy priority—with a high-level, cross-sector audience. One capstone event brought together the nation's minister of justice, the minister for women's affairs, the deputy minister for defense, the attorney general, two supreme court justices, women magistrates and top women in Chile's law enforcement agencies to engage on gender issues. For the first time in recent memory, women guests far outnumbered males at the ambassador's reception honoring the WIFLE guests. The program generated positive press, emphasized the significant contributions of women in traditionally male fields and planted seeds for Chile to create a group similar to WIFLE. The message was clear: Citizen security, law enforcement and justice are improved for all when women play an active role.

Gannon's EEO influence was not solely outward. At his suggestion, his assistant RSO became the post's only EEO counselor, and Gannon reinforced the importance of EEO by putting it on his weekly staff meeting agenda. His commitment putting EEO first was an example for others. His efforts raised the profile of EEO among the post's law enforcement group and the Country Team, and led others to integrate women's issues into their sections' programs or messages.

The runner-up for the 2016 EEO Award, Lisa K. Bucher, was recognized for promoting fairness, equity and inclusion in her job with the Foreign Service Grievance Board (FSGB) staff. There, she advocated for maximizing protection of privacy for grievants, particularly in cases where bias or the existence of a hostile work environment were alleged. At her recommendation, the FSGB recruited an intern through the Workforce Recruitment Program, which connects federal and private sector employers nationwide with highly motivated college students and recent graduates with disabilities who are eager to prove their abilities in the workplace through summer or permanent jobs. And when there was a vacancy in the FSGB staff, Bucher convinced the office to hire through a program designed to attract highly qualified individuals with disabilities. She also led her office's efforts to recruit speakers to enhance FSGB members' understanding of obstacles for career advancement for members of minority and stigmatized groups.

These award winners exemplify two different but effective approaches to "EEO First" leadership, an achievement to which we should all aspire. They both deserve to be recognized for the exemplary ways they integrated EEO principles into programs and everyday practice. I know that there are many other unsung EEO heroes working at State. Please tell us about the efforts of someone you know or work with and consider nominating him or her for the 2017 award. The EEO Award is given annually for leadership, skill, imagination and innovation in extending and promoting EEO for all employees, and carries a prize of \$10,000. For additional information on the EEO Award, please send an email to diversity@state.gov. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John M. Robinson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Prevention for Peace

Office seeks partners to stop conflicts

By Rory E. Anderson, civil society Partnerships officer

The Office of Partnerships and Strategic Communication (PSC) works to strengthen and create partnerships as part of the peacebuilding work of the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO). CSO helps diplomats prevent or respond to conflict and facilitate post-conflict stability, focusing on the prevention of violence against civilians.

With 11 staff members, including the director and deputy, PSC supports the entire bureau and front office's external engagement goals through cultivating and maintaining strong partnerships, comprehensive strategies and active communications. "Effectively preventing and responding to conflict is an act of partnership," noted PSC Acting Director Deborah MacLean. The partnership officers manage portfolios associated with bilateral and multilateral relationships, and relationships with civil and military organizations and civil society. Other officers are involved in legislative affairs, communications and bureau strategy.

"PSC provides the connective tissue that helps the bureau initiate and manage these relationships," said Robin Holzhauser, PSC's bilateral partnerships officer. For example, PSC developed and manages the Stabilization Leaders Forum (SLF), a platform where the stabilization units of eight allied governments meet regularly to share knowledge and cooperate overseas. SLF member countries include Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the United States and the United Kingdom. Through the SLF, PSC contributed to Germany's 2015 security sector reform conference and established an Early Warning and Action Working Group in 2016 to mitigate fragility and violent conflict.

In addition, the forum provides an arena for PSC to promote broader thematic issues important to the bureau. After forum meetings, in-person annual meetings occur, focused on topics such as atrocity prevention, election violence, early-warning indicators of conflict, violent extremism, mediation, the role of gender in conflict, monitoring and evaluation techniques, and research methods and goals.



Members of the office staff pose for their group portrait.

Photo by Ed Warner

As PSC's civil society partnerships officer, I believe the Department's partnering should extend beyond government, because NGOs and think tanks have important perspectives that can help the Department see a crisis with a fresh outlook. (I recently joined CSO after working in the NGO world for 15 years.) To promote partnering with civil society groups, I meet with representatives from NGOs and think tanks to ensure their viewpoints make it into discussions of the bureau's policy priorities on atrocity prevention, countering violent extremism and promoting stabilization by preventing violence associated with transitions such as elections and ceasefires.

Although "conflict" is part of CSO's name, building a path to sustainable peace is at the core of CSO's stabilization work. To promote stabilization, the bureau has increased its partnering with civil society. In November, for instance, PSC supported the bureau in convening representatives of 37 domestic and international NGOs, think tanks and academic institutions to launch the Peace Process Support Network. Under Secretary Tom Shannon gave the keynote address at this event, which promoted knowledge about how civil society members of the Peace Process Support Network can help bureaus and embassies reach their goals to prevent or end conflict in their countries.

"The concept of partnerships extends beyond government to include NGOs, think tanks and academia, for they all have important perspectives that can help the Department see a crisis with a fresh outlook," MacLean observed. ■



Staff members Telside L. Manson, left, and Dalenika Cox chat in an office hallway.
Photo by Ed Warner



The author, right, shares a laugh with Acting Director Deborah Ann MacLean.
Photo by Ed Warner



Staffer Robin Holzhauser greets a visitor to her office.

Photo by Ed Warner



MAKING A STATEMENT

Secretary Kerry reflects on Department's achievements, lauds employees

By Isaac D. Pacheco

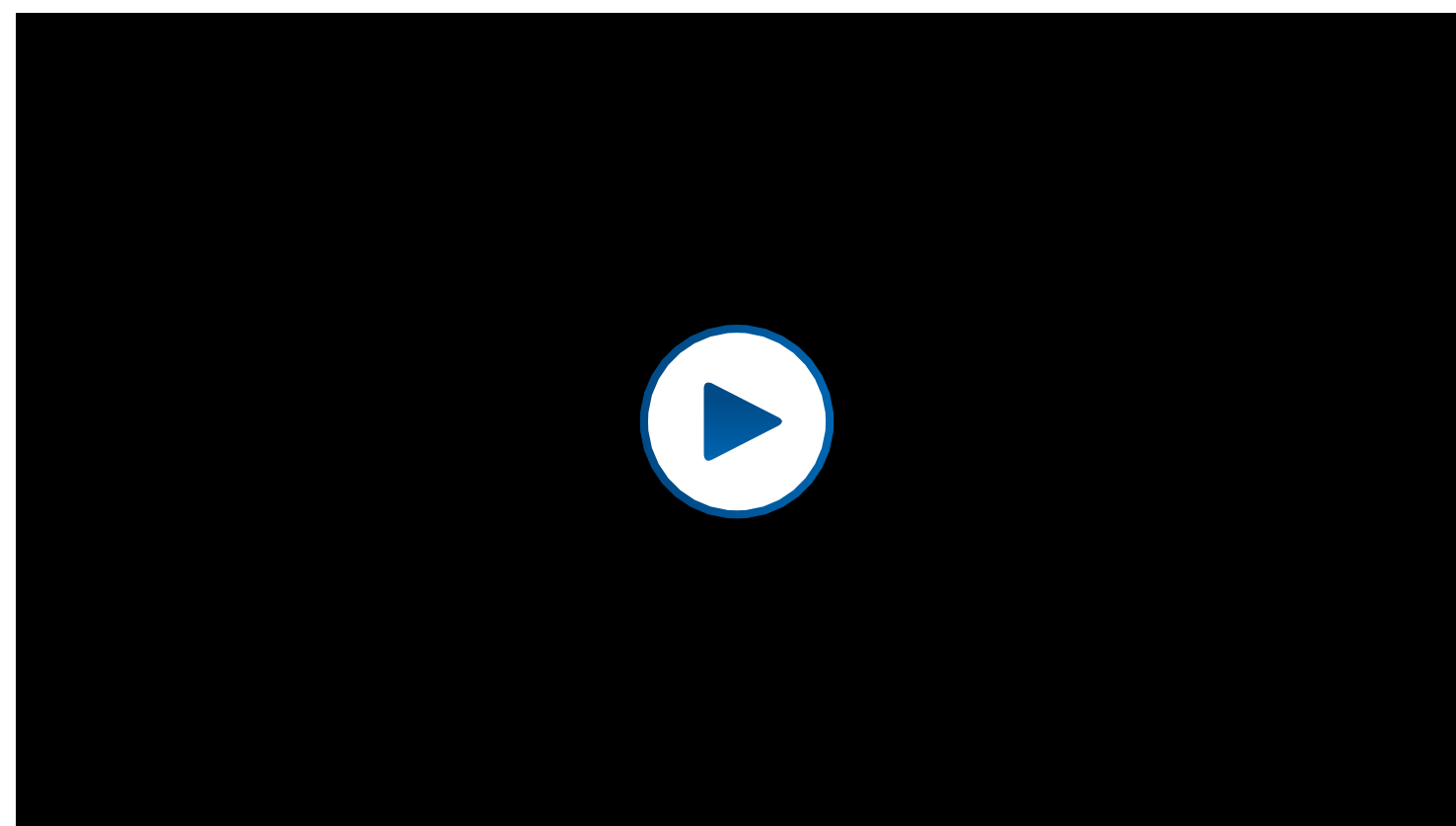
Nearly three years ago, President Obama selected long-serving former United States Senator and Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee John Kerry to serve as the nation's 68th secretary of state. A polished statesman, one-time presidential nominee and decorated Vietnam-era naval officer-turned-peace activist, Kerry brought a wealth of experience to the Department of State and worked tirelessly across political, ideological and geographic divides to advance U.S. foreign policy and enhance diplomatic relations with other nations.

During his tenure, Kerry built a coalition of 65 countries to counter violent extremism and defeat Daesh, negotiated the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons, reestablished diplomatic relations with Cuba and enlisted world leaders to join the United States in signing the historic Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Kerry led a Department that responded to an Ebola epidemic in West Africa, rallied European allies against Russian aggression, deepened economic engagement in the Asian-Pacific region, convened the first U.S.-Africa Leaders' Summit and oversaw the first peaceful democratic transition in Afghanistan, among other achievements.

As he neared the conclusion of his appointment as Secretary of State, Kerry sat down with State Magazine to reflect on his tenure, commend the men and women who make up the Department's workforce for their amazing achievements and urge them to continue seeking out truth and diplomatic solutions as they advocate for freedom, human rights and democracy around the globe.

| *Cont.* 1 of 4 | ▼

State Magazine: Mr. Secretary, share with us your thoughts about some of the work that you've done here as well as a look forward for the Department.



Secretary Kerry: Being Secretary of State and having the privilege of leading a department of 70,000 people all over the world has been the privilege of a lifetime. And I have only had reinforced in me again and again the extraordinary contributions, sacrifices, commitment, perseverance and patriotism of those who go into the Foreign Service or Civil Service but who really make Foggy Bottom writ large what it is.

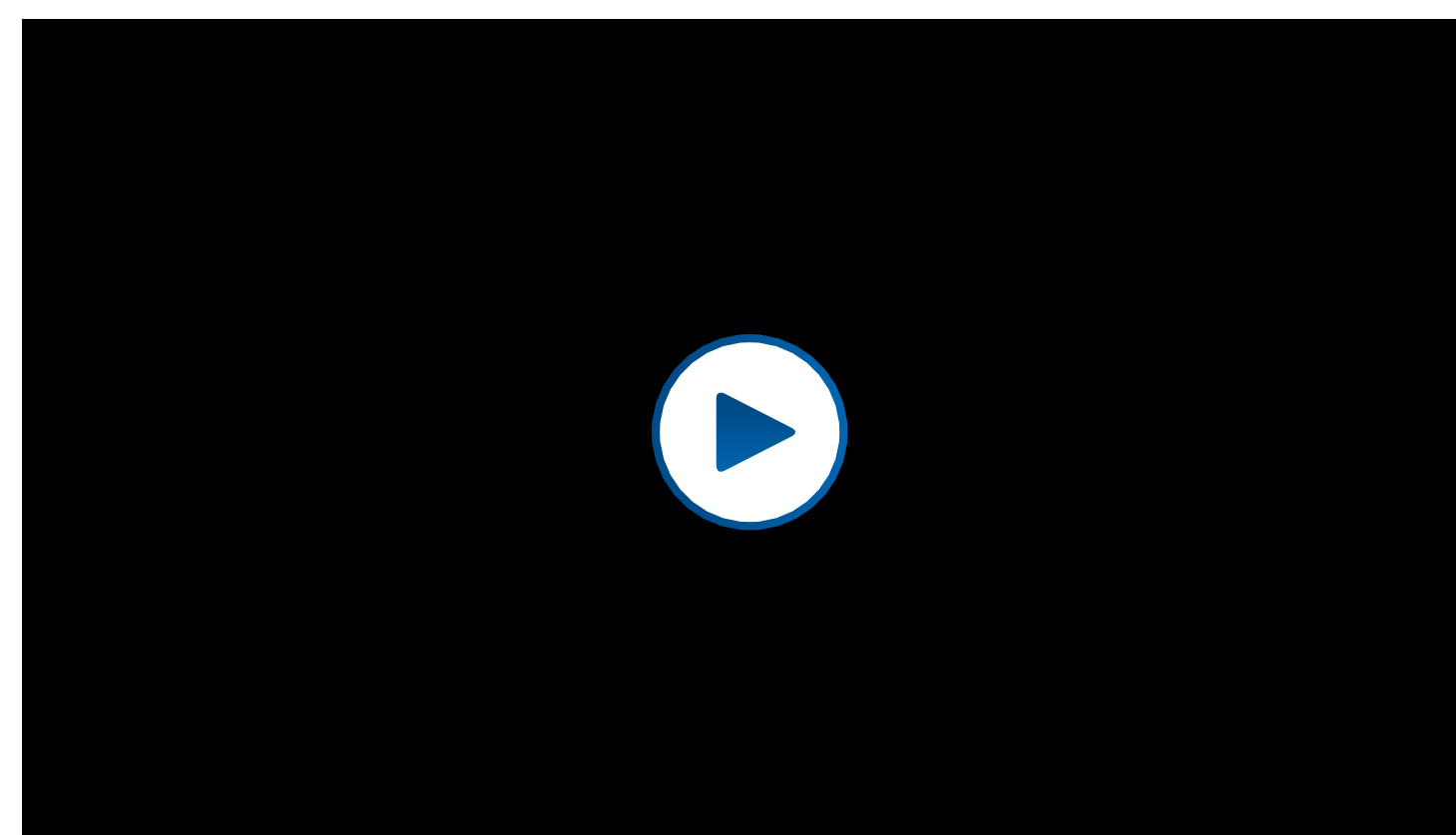
And I have seen, in so many different examples, the reinforcement of the benefits to our nation that come from the extraordinary contributions of people who give of themselves in so many different ways. I mean, families shift their kids out of schools, people move every X number of years, but they do it willingly and in a world of greater risk with enthusiasm and commitment that makes all the difference to our country because we are able to carry our values and protect our interests on a daily basis.

Not a lot of jobs afford that kind of reward, so for me to watch that and see that happening from the level of the consulate window where

somebody gets a visa, or a problem is initially confronted and then later solved, has really been reaffirming of the value of the United States of America's outreach and efforts. And I'm grateful to the quality of work that is done here and the unbelievable hours put in and the lengths to which people go. They jump on a plane on a moment's notice, they fly somewhere, they sit down in complicated negotiations day after day after day, they give up a holiday, they lose time seeing a kid's play or being in a sports event or something—[there are] amazing sacrifices here.

Nothing has impressed me more than the quality of the work here and the energy and enthusiasm and commitment of the people who do it. And it has allowed us to be more engaged in more places on more critical issues of consequence at the same time with outcomes that have had consequence than at any other time, I believe, in American history.

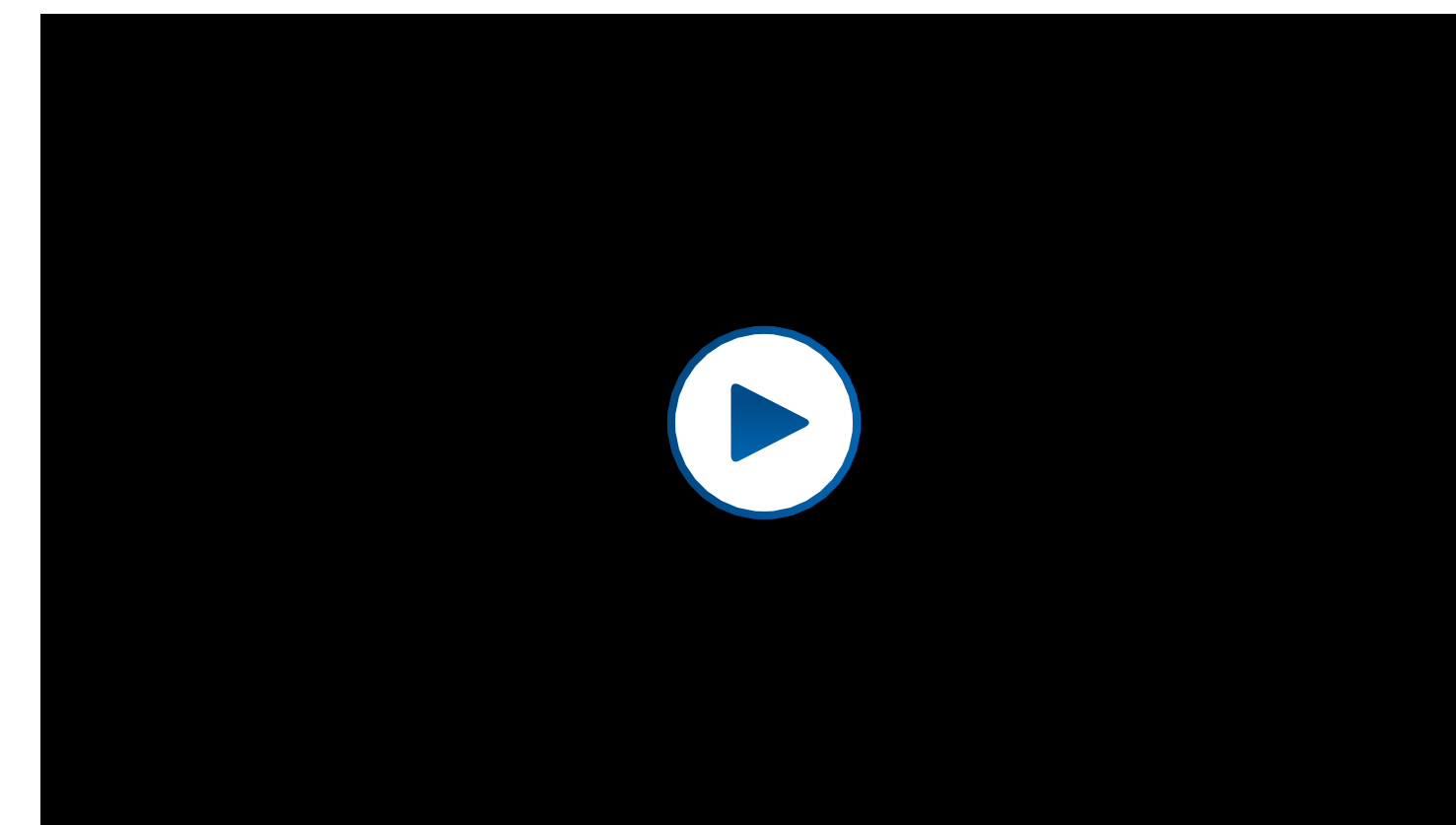
State Magazine: Why is diplomacy important to our nation's continued success?



Secretary Kerry: Diplomacy is the key to our nation's success. War is the failure of diplomacy, or the failure of the ability to design a strategy

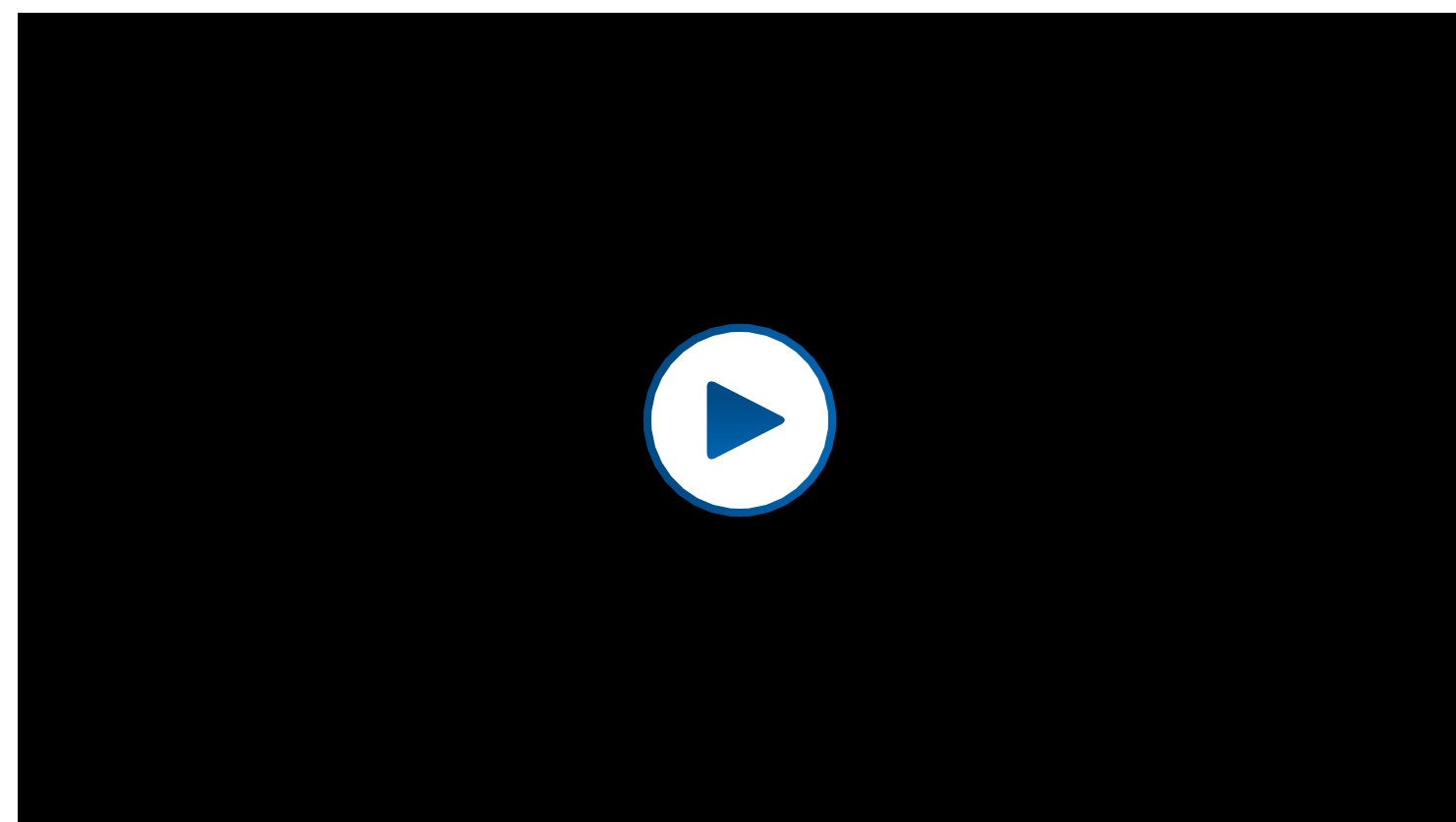
that is an alternative to the war. I've been able to experience the reinforcement of that premise time and time again in the course of the last four years.

State Magazine: What are some of the unique challenges that you and the Department have faced in trying to accomplish such a multifaceted mission?



Secretary Kerry: Well, externally, there are countries that don't accept our view of diversity. And there are places where we've had to push back against cultural or ideological or personal barriers, and we've done so—and we've done so, I think, with great effect. I think we have carried the values of our country and our tolerance and diversity to the farthest reaches of the planet. And we've always held our heads high and done so with a sense of purpose and, I think, rectitude that is appropriate to the task. I think we've changed attitudes in countries as a result of that. So our diversity really reflects the world's needs, and I think it's leadership by example.

State Magazine: What have you learned from your interaction both with the Department's employees and through your travels and engagements with world leaders that will stay with you and continue to influence the way you think? | *Cont. 2 of 4* | ▼



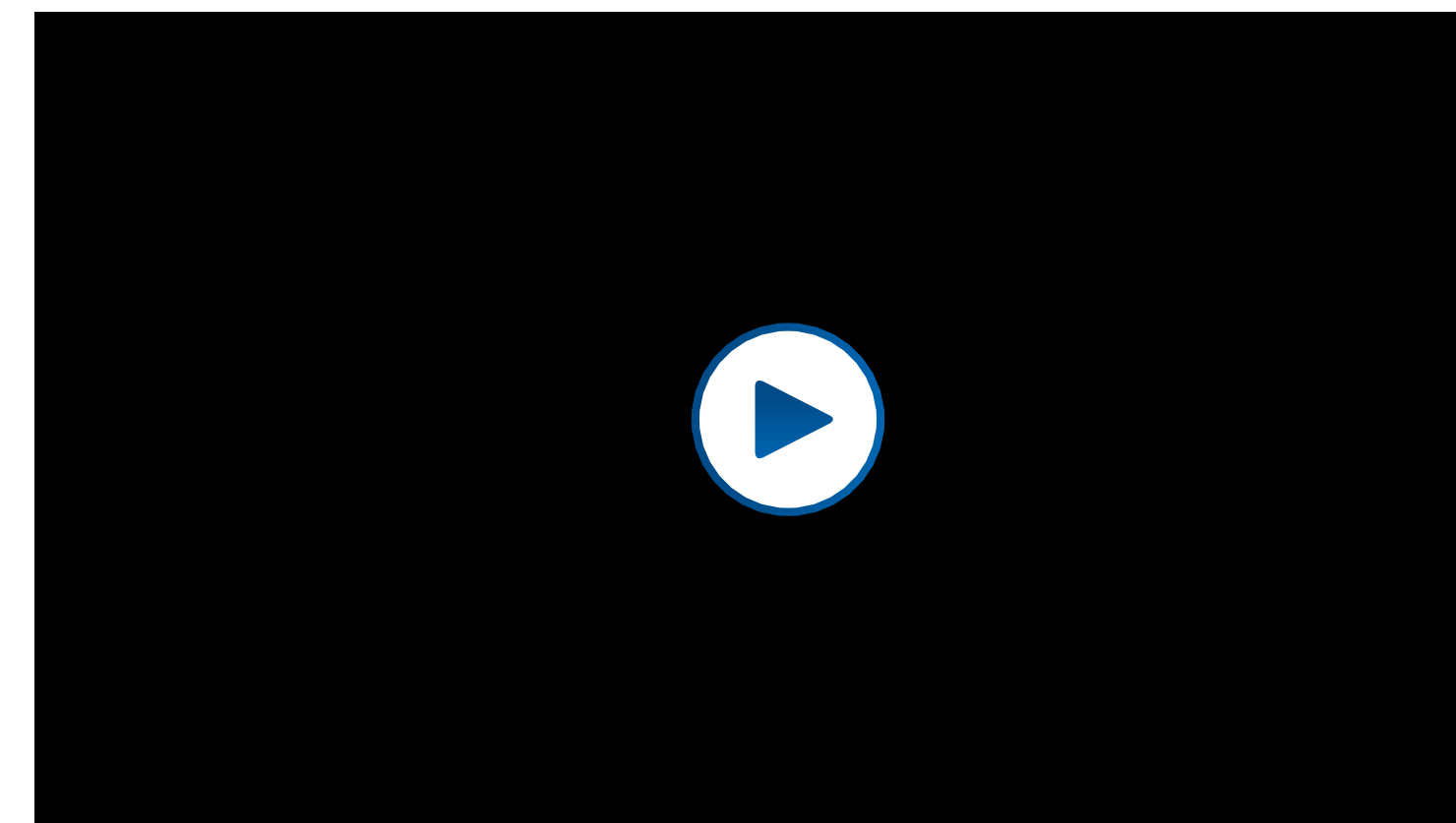
Secretary Kerry: Well, everything here is going to stay with me. This has been an extraordinary four-year whirlwind, and it's hard to choose. I mean, there are so many different layers of that. Broadly speaking, there's just an enthusiasm here for public service and an enthusiasm for representing America and making the world safer and more prosperous and fairer and so forth that is infectious. And I've never gone anywhere in the world where we don't have examples that just are actually exciting and instantly gratifying. So it's been a great gift to me to go to an embassy in some far-off land and see the whole embassy at a meet-and-greet [event], parents bringing their kids and kids all excited about learning a language or being in a place of a different culture, and it's a thrill. I mean, it's really—a great part of the job is not us feeling that we always have to encourage people or, some cases, kick people in the butt or urge them to do more or do better. They're the ones inspiring us, I think, by virtue of the day-to-day accomplishments that are being achieved in country after country. And for me, the best return on this thing has been the pride I take in what our folks are doing on an everyday basis, some without any visibility, without any pat on the back, on a daily basis without anything except their compass, their moral and policy compass steering

them in the right direction and doing amazing things. Whether it's in Afghanistan or Bangladesh or Malaysia, Vietnam, Africa—pick a country. I mean, there are just incredible things happening around the world. And our leadership is essential in any one of those places, and I'm struck by how much effort we expend to provide that leadership in all parts of the world. And we're making that difference.

As I said earlier, we're more engaged with more significant crises in more places all at the same time with greater consequence in the outcome than we ever have been in American diplomacy. I will defend that, whether it's Cuba or Ebola or Zika or AIDS or powering Africa or emigration from Latin America or children who are oppressed in one country or another, Latin America [or] elsewhere; whether it's our efforts for the TPP [Trans-Pacific Partnership], for global climate change, for oceans, for change in policy with Cuba, working on the DPRK [Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea], keeping Putin from going into Kyiv and Ukraine. You can connect the dots, country to country, where we're helping to make a difference—in Kosovo, in Serbia, in East Europe. You name it, we're working it.

I think I've been struck by the degree to which people are enthusiastically embracing that mission.

State Magazine: You mentioned how important it was that people's moral compass helps push the Department forward. What would you say to the majority of the department's Civil and Foreign Service members who are going to continue to be here under a new administration with a potentially completely different set of priorities—how would you exhort them?

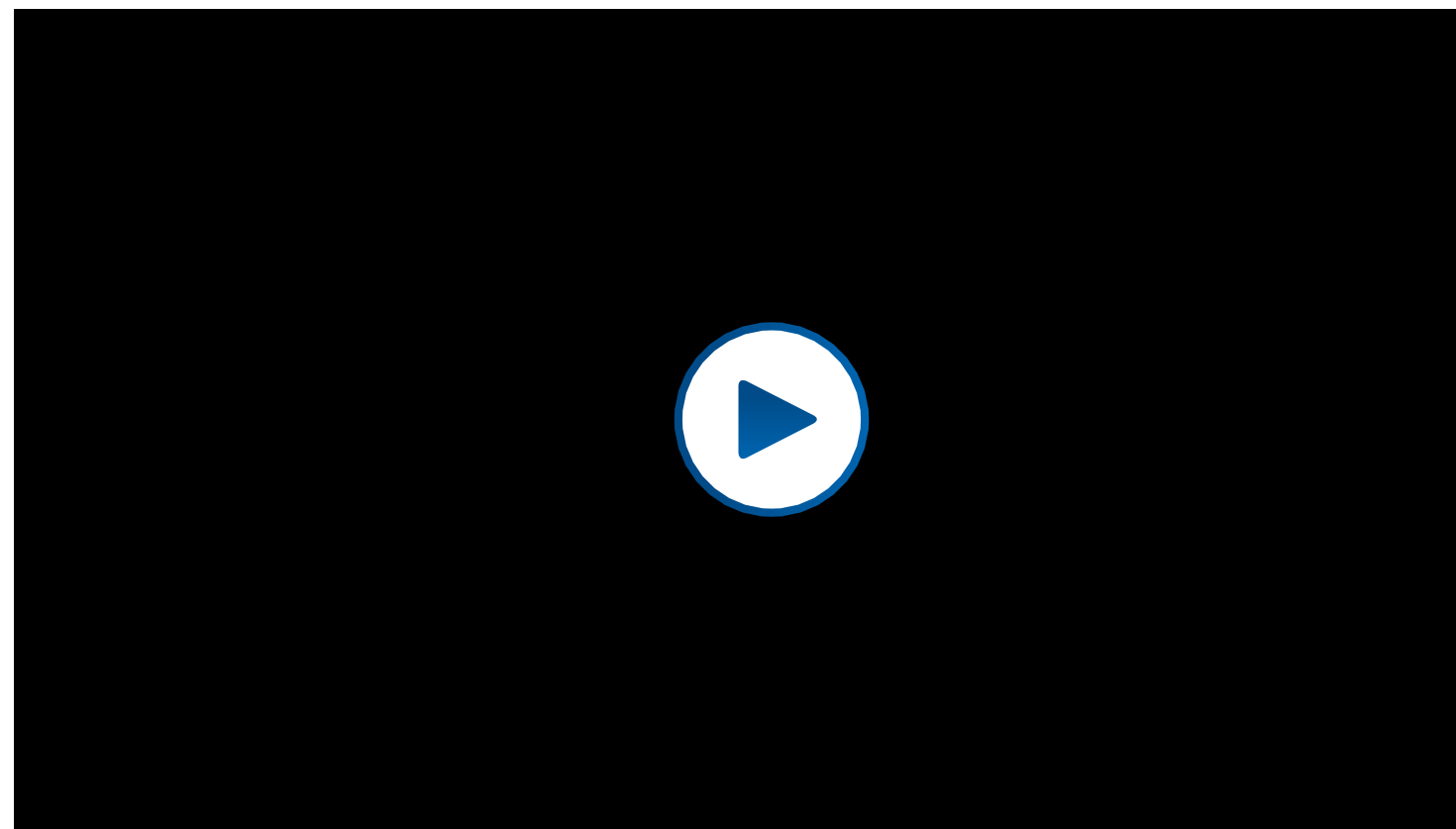


Secretary Kerry: Well, I'd encourage them to stay the course. Don't let up. Put your best ideas in front of the new administration. Tell the truth. It's very important that we have fact-based policy decisions, and I would urge everybody to make sure that they're dealing with facts. Don't tailor anything to meet what they think are the preconceived notions of the administration. Do what you would do to tell the truth and draw the picture of reality and help push people to make decisions that are founded on realities of what's happening.

It doesn't always guarantee the right outcome in a decision, but you've got to know that you're pushing in the right direction. And it would be a tragedy to see people say, well, I disagree with this administration so I'm not going to bother to do that. That's abdicating a fundamental responsibility and I think not helpful to the country, because everybody working today in the Civil Service and Foreign Service are the links to those realities, and we need that input. So I would urge people to hammer home the truth, put the best ideas you can on the table, don't tailor them to what they'd think are the wishes of the new administration and stick by your guns. I think that's the key thing.

| Cont. 3 of 4 | ▼

State Magazine: What is one thing you would want the American public or the person who may not have a lot of experience with the Department to know about the work that the men and women doing here to forward diplomacy around the world?



Secretary Kerry: I would want Americans to understand how hard the work is, how complicated today's world is, in some places risky and dangerous, and how dedicated and profoundly committed to our country, how patriotic the people are who work here on behalf of our nation. And I would want them to recognize that this is a place where people try, without gilding the lily or avoiding the hard truths or confronting realities, to shape a better world, to create peace and prosperity and to change things for the better.

And I think that by and large we have had an incredible ability to do that. When you look at what we've done to change China's attitude about climate change and move them [toward the] mainstream and to join in partnership with them and create the predicate to being able to get a Paris agreement on climate change accomplished, or what we did on hydrofluorocarbons in

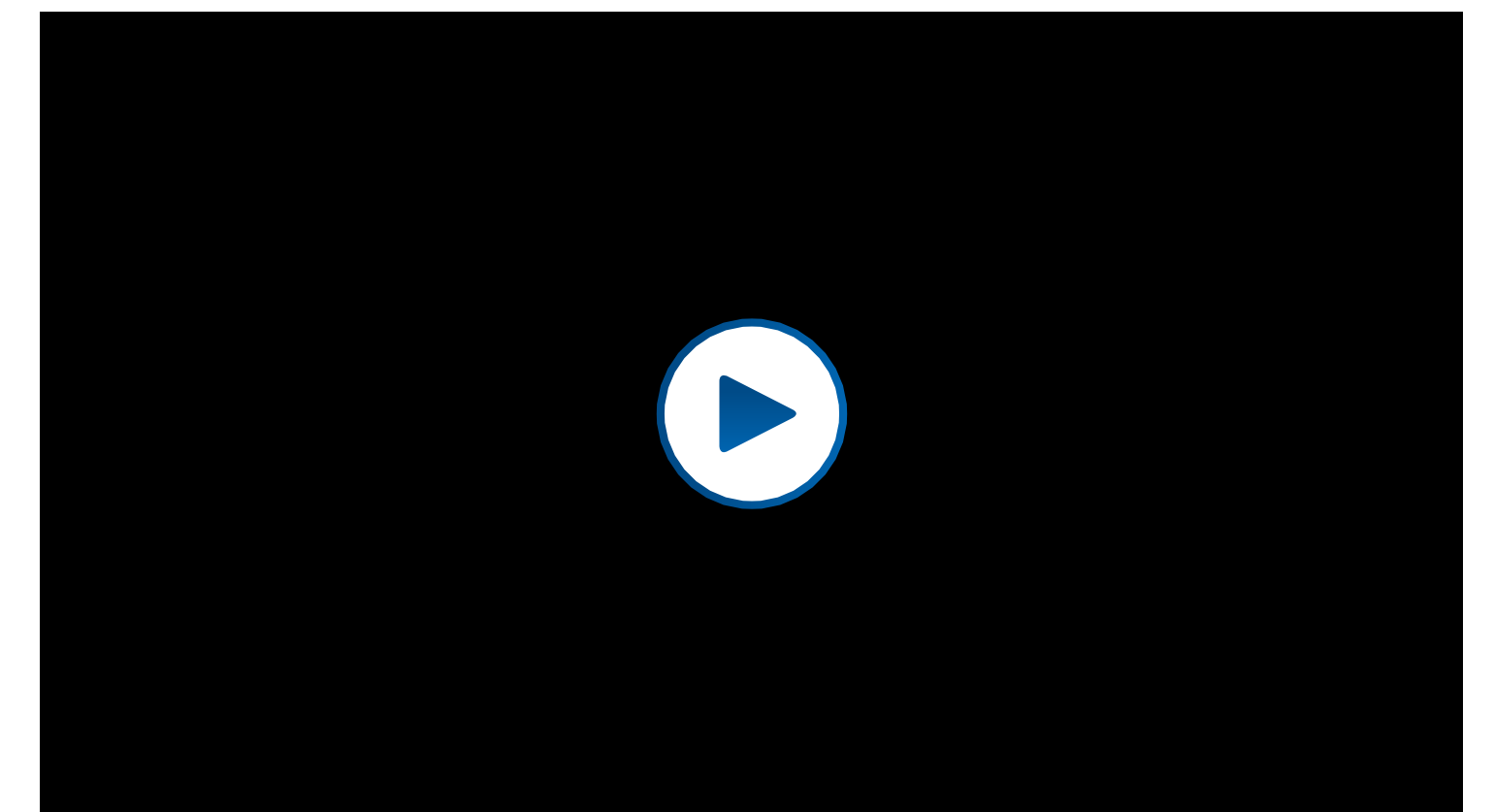
Kigali and what we did on the airline industry to contain the emissions of our aircraft and so forth, these are three monumental leaps for the environment. What we did on the oceans and setting aside millions of square kilometers of ocean-protected areas and the Ross Sea, the largest protected area on the planet; what we did to raise awareness about the challenge of the combination of climate change and ocean exploitation that is putting life at risk. What we did to change policy in Cuba, what we did to break with 50 years of history, what we did to help Colombia bring peace about in a war that's lasted for 50 years, the longest war in the hemisphere. And we contributed significantly to the ability of that [peace] to be able to happen.

What we've done to try to rid the world of a potential nuclear weapon in the hands of a country that threatened other nations in the region and getting Iran to join into an agreement where we haven't talked in 35 years; what we did to prevent millions of people from dying of Ebola when that was the prediction, when we courageously—the President sent 3,000 troops over there to help build health care delivery capacity, and we made a difference. What we did to help a generation now be born in Africa free of AIDs [and] what we're doing to build day-to-day capacity in country after country where USAID joins with our embassies in working to deliver a new kind of development that is lasting and substantive enough that it really makes a difference to that particular country.

I could run through a long, long list of these things that we have done that come about because of personal diplomacy. Every day there's personal diplomacy. It's what makes the difference. And I urge our Foreign Service officers and civil servants

up and down the line, wherever they are, to work to build those relationships in countries because that's the reservoir of goodwill that gets you through the hard times. And when you have a difficult negotiation or you have a crisis or something has happened where we have made a mistake and we need to explain to people the legitimacy of the mistake and the need to continue the relationship, it's the personal bond that will be far more effective in doing that than some press release or some far-off utterance from Washington, which will fall on doubting ears without the kind of personal sustenance of the relationship itself. So, my counsel to our folks is to take the time to build the relationships, take the time to think long term.

State Magazine: A parting thought?



Secretary Kerry: Just a profound thank you to my fellow travelers in the Department on this journey and a hope that with the next administration we will have a building on a good solid foundation, not a tearing down of a foundation, and that we have the opportunity to be able to make our country stronger and the world safer in the diplomacy that we do. ■



Click to watch video

CUBA

Havana: Re-engaging with an estranged neighbor

By Craig Simons, consular officer, U.S. Embassy Havana



Opening page: A young couple travels through Old Havana in a bright red convertible after their wedding ceremony.

Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco

Stroll along the Malecón—Havana’s oceanside boulevard—and witness Cuban history. Across from its eastern end stands El Morro, a fortress built in 1589 by the city’s then-Spanish rulers. Walk west and take in reminders of more modern history: a statue commemorating the victims of the USS Maine, a warship sunk in Havana’s harbor at the beginning of the Spanish-American War; a hotel built in the 1950s by gangster Meyer Lansky. Here are also ubiquitous posters from revolutionary Cuba—“Che” Guevara, Camilo Cienfuegos and Fidel Castro, the former communist leader whose November death prompted passionate obituaries worldwide.

Perhaps the most poignant reminder of the vicissitudes of change, however, sits where the road bends south, like the curve at the top of a question mark. Squarely facing the emerald Florida Straits, the U.S. Embassy—constructed in 1953, closed shortly after Castro became Cuba’s leader in 1959, reopened as a limited U.S. Interests Section in 1977, and only restored to official embassy status in 2015—tells stories of the past. Now, more importantly, it speaks of recent re-engagement between neighbors.

“The reestablishment of diplomatic ties” between Cuba and the United States “has given us a chance to address common challenges and find

| *Cont.* 2 of 14 | ▼

Old meets new in a Havana alleyway where a young man reads text messages on his mobile phone under a Cuban flag emblazoned with the visage of the late Cuban revolutionary Camilo Cienfuegos.

Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco



Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco



Vendors display fresh cuts of meat and a colorful selection of fruit and legumes at San Rafael Market in Havana.

Photos by Isaac D. Pacheco

areas of mutual interest,” said Ambassador Jeffrey DeLaurentis, Embassy Havana’s chargé d’affaires. “We are working to overcome decades of mistrust and to find a more effective way forward.”

For the United States and Cuba, history runs deep. In the Spanish-American war, American soldiers helped Cubans end centuries of Spanish rule on the island in 1898. During the first half of the 20th century, Americans invested in farms, businesses, roads and railways. After Fidel Castro’s forces took control, relations soured; Castro’s government nationalized many foreign assets and the Soviet Union eventually moved in nuclear-armed missiles, leading to the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Congress responded by passing the Cuban Assets Control Regulations, sanctions intended to encourage a shift in Cuban politics, and the bilateral relationship largely froze. Only after months of secret talks between the governments in 2014 and 2015 were diplomatic ties finally fully restored.

For more than 50 American officers (including the Marine Security Guard detachment) and roughly 300 Locally Employed staff at Embassy Havana, the change has opened a wide range of opportunities. Among other things, the embassy has overseen

| Cont. 4 of 14 | ▼





Previous page: Friends catch up with each other on a back street in Old Havana.
Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco

the establishment of nearly a dozen new bilateral accords, including agreements to re-establish direct commercial flights, protect wetlands and marine areas, and cooperate on counternarcotics work. Nearly as many new agreements—including those on how the governments would respond to an oil spill in the Florida Straits and on increased cooperation on earthquake preparedness—are nearing completion.

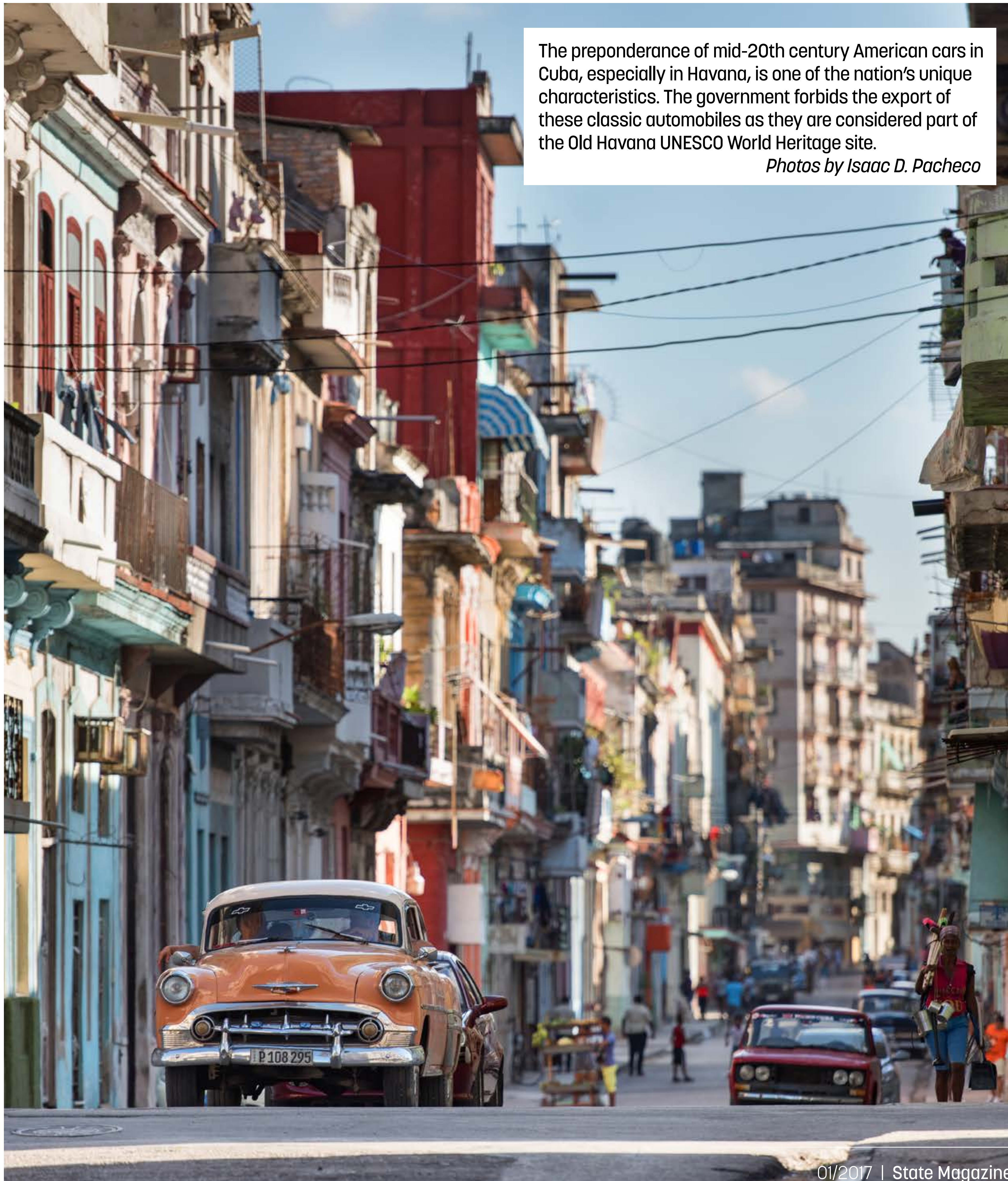
Over the same period, Embassy Havana has hosted hundreds of visitors. President Obama visited in March 2016, becoming the first sitting U.S. president to visit the island since Calvin Coolidge 88 years earlier. Seven cabinet-secretary level officials have visited, some more than once. And the embassy has supported the White House's initiative to increase people-to-people contact by providing frequent briefings to American travelers.

The shift has also given the embassy opportunities to engage with a wider range of Cubans. Officers have established new contacts throughout the Cuban government and within Cuba's growing civil society community. Because officers are now talking with groups that, before 2015, had faced pressure to avoid contact with them, they are able to better understand Cuba and more effectively promote American aims, including improving human rights and civil liberties. "We've been able to engage on a full range of issues," Political/Economic Section Chief Dana Brown said. "It matters to talk to us now."

Other embassy sections have also seized opportunities. The public affairs section has begun working with the Cuban ministry of education to offer English-language workshops to Cuban teachers, "something we could never do before," said Bruce Kleiner, the embassy's public diplomacy officer. He added that the section recently opened | *Cont.* 6 of 14 | ▼



A man adds the final touches to his colorful painting of a doorway at an artists' co-op in Havana.
Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco



The preponderance of mid-20th century American cars in Cuba, especially in Havana, is one of the nation's unique characteristics. The government forbids the export of these classic automobiles as they are considered part of the Old Havana UNESCO World Heritage site.

Photos by Isaac D. Pacheco

TOEFL and GRE testing centers and that Cuba's state-run media has given prominent coverage to the visits by U.S. officials, including by broadcasting a speech by President Obama live to the Cuban people.

The consular section has focused on a surging number of American visitors. The number of non-Cuban-American U.S. citizen visitors almost doubled in 2015 from a year earlier, and with new commercial flights, further increases are expected. While U.S. officers had few opportunities to visit cities outside of Havana before 2015, the section, which is adding its first full-time American Citizens Services chief, has begun meeting with officials and contacts across the island.

"For the consular section, making sure we take care of U.S. citizens while continuing to offer efficient service to tens of thousands of Cubans applying for visas is our key challenge," said Brendan Mullarkey, the embassy's consul general. The section, Mullarkey added, has been working at a demanding pace to meet increased requests from American visitors and help staff VIP visits while meeting a migration accords mandate to issue at least 20,000 immigrant visa and parole cases annually. "It's an exciting time to be part of Embassy Havana," he said. "Despite that there's a lot of ground to make up to fully normalize operations, we're making rapid progress."

The improving relations create opportunities for Foreign Service officers, according to Deputy Chief of Mission Scott Hamilton. "Being here now is an incredible opportunity for officers to have a significant impact in a challenging context as we rebuild ties from the ground level. New officers will learn how to

| Cont. 8 of 14 | ▼

Old Havana's colorful side streets attract visitors for their unique charm and character.

Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco



|||||
A Cuban bee hummingbird, the world's smallest bird, feeds on
the nectar of Firebush (*Hamelia patens*) flowers proffered by a
conservationist at a hummingbird sanctuary near Playa Larga, Cuba.
Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco



be effective diplomats and more experienced colleagues will hone their skills,” he said.

For local Cubans, as for officers serving in Havana, economic shifts over recent years have created other benefits. Fidel Castro handed power to his brother, President Raul Castro, in 2008, and his government has begun to allow increased private business. The most obvious shift has been an explosion of restaurants, bed-and-breakfast hotels and bars. While private restaurants were sparse a decade ago, today’s options include dozens of eateries with chefs trained in countries including South Korea, Italy, China and Spain.

Still, life is not all rosy in Havana. Shopping for basic food supplies can be a chore, Internet connections remain slow and expensive, and there are no shopping malls akin to those found in many countries. At the same time, crime is low and residents can find arts and sports education for themselves and their kids at a reasonable cost. As the embassy’s community liaison officer, Moneiva Cromwell, said, “Kids are generally very happy here.”

Strolling along the Malecón, it is easy to see Havana’s unique blend of past and future. | Cont. 10 of 14 ▾



President Obama waves to the crowd at the Estadio Latinoamericano in Havana, Cuba, as he and members of a U.S. delegation including Secretary of State John Kerry attend an exhibition game March 22, 2016, between the Cuban National Baseball Team and the Tampa Bay Rays. *State Department Photo*

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Strolling along the Malecón, it is easy to see Havana’s unique blend of past and future. | Cont. 10 of 14 ▾



NBA great Shaquille O’Neal served as the first State Department Sports Envoy to Cuba June 25-28, 2016. He taught basketball clinics with Dallas Mavericks Assistant Head Coach Kaleb Canales.

State Department Photo

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Strolling along the Malecón, it is easy to see Havana’s unique blend of past and future. | Cont. 10 of 14 ▾



Cubans celebrate the arrival of Carnival’s The Adonia May 2, 2016, the first cruise ship from the U.S. to dock in Havana for almost 40 years.

State Department Photo

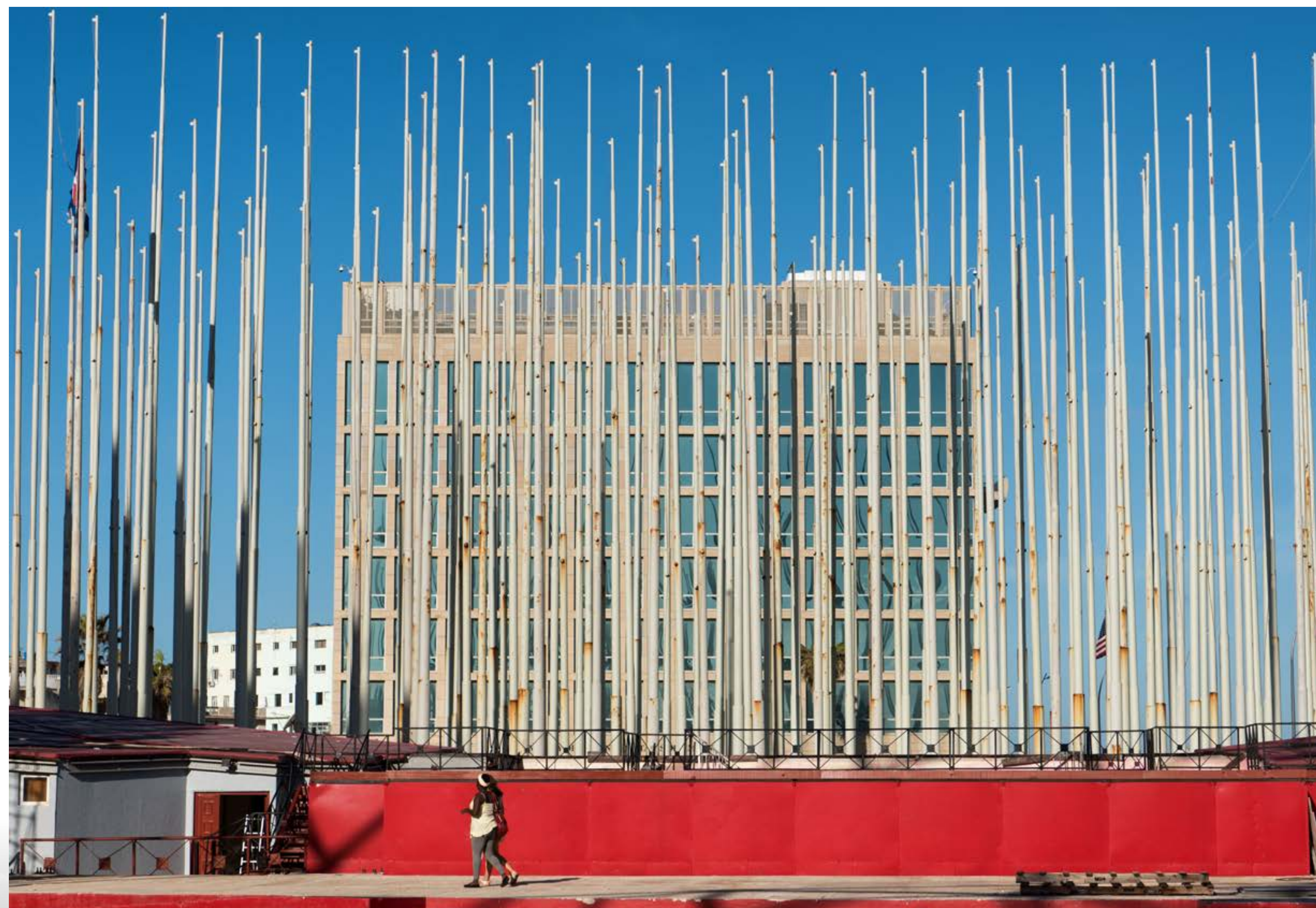


President Obama noted in a historic speech in Havana, March 22, 2016, that Cuba's young people will shape its future. Here, a group friends conduct an impromptu sing-a-long in Paseo del Prado, Havana.
Photo by Scott Hamilton

Vintage Fords and Chevys cruise past crumbling villas and under-construction hotels. Boys play marbles while chatting about Major League Baseball. Looking north across the Florida Straits from the U.S. Embassy, it is also easy to imagine how the neighbors, once estranged, can continue to find common ground. ■

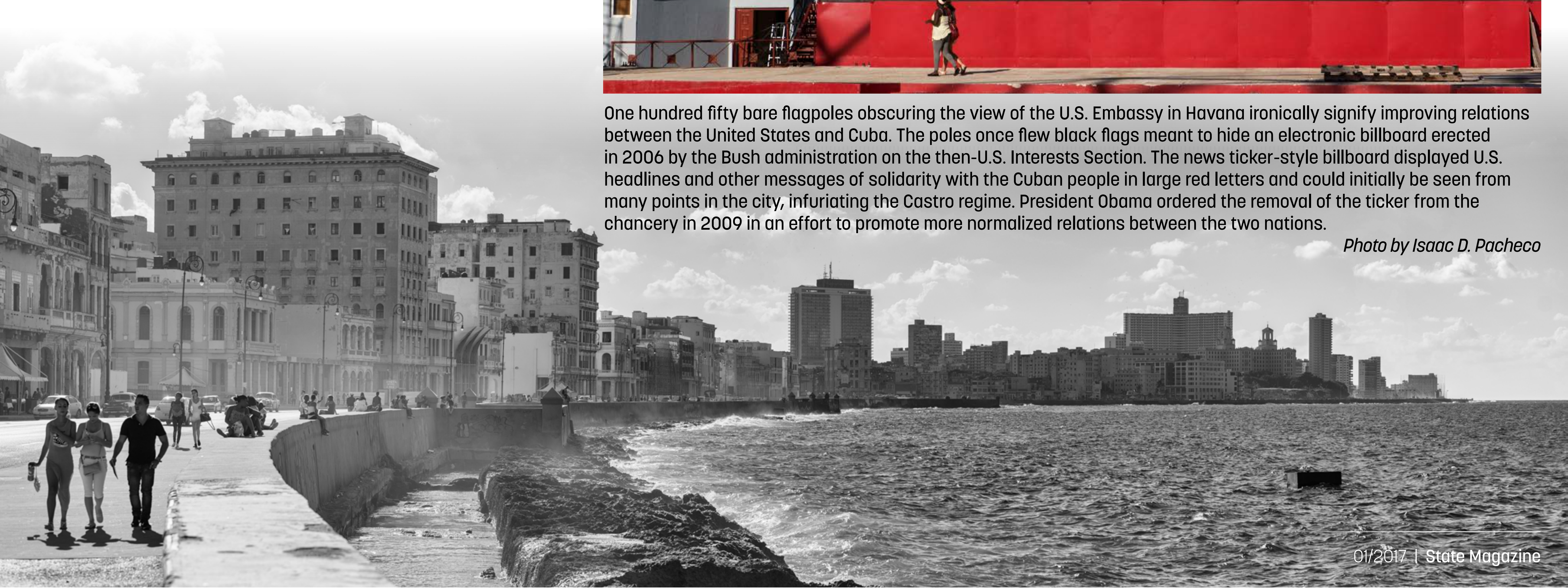
People walk along the Malecón esplanade near Old Havana.

Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco



One hundred fifty bare flagpoles obscuring the view of the U.S. Embassy in Havana ironically signify improving relations between the United States and Cuba. The poles once flew black flags meant to hide an electronic billboard erected in 2006 by the Bush administration on the then-U.S. Interests Section. The news ticker-style billboard displayed U.S. headlines and other messages of solidarity with the Cuban people in large red letters and could initially be seen from many points in the city, infuriating the Castro regime. President Obama ordered the removal of the ticker from the chancery in 2009 in an effort to promote more normalized relations between the two nations.

Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco





A painter works on the exterior of El Capitolio as part of a large restoration project intended to prepare the building to house Cuba's National Assembly.
Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco



At a Glance

Cuba



Capital:
Havana

Government Type:
Communist state

Area:
110,860 sq km

Population:
11,179,995 (July 2016 est.)

Major urban areas:
Havana 2.137 million

Ethnic groups:
white 64.1%, mestizo 26.6%, black 9.3% (2012 est.)

Languages:
Spanish (official)

Religions:
nominally Roman Catholic, Protestant, Jehovah's Witnesses, Jewish, Santeria

Exports (commodities):
petroleum, nickel, medical products, sugar, tobacco, fish, citrus, coffee

Export partners:
Canada 17.7%, Venezuela 13.8%, China 13%, Netherlands 6.4%, Spain 5.4%, Belize 4.7% (2015)

Imports:
petroleum, food, machinery and equipment, chemicals

Import partners:
Venezuela 31.8%, China 17.6%, Spain 10%, Brazil 4.8% (2015)

Currency:
Cuban peso

Internet country code:
.CU

* The CIA World Factbook





2016 Annual Awards

Extraordinary performances hailed and honored By Michael Hahn, associate editor, *State Magazine*

No year's cycle of work would be complete without recognition of those Civil and Foreign Service employees who have advanced U.S. diplomacy exceptionally well, exemplifying the Department's values and commitment, in many cases under challenging circumstances. The Nov. 16 ceremony in the Benjamin Franklin Room at Main State honored 48 such extraordinary individuals, including 10 who worked in Afghanistan or Iraq, or on issues related to Iran and Syria, a clear acknowledgment of the special circumstances involving those challenging assignments. A standing-room audience of 300 colleagues, mentors, sponsors and family members reveled in the show and excitement of the moment. At the end of the honors event, attendees gave the awardees resounding applause.

Deputy Secretary Tony Blinken gave the keynote address, thanking the donors whose contributions make many of these awards possible, and noting how Franklin's tenacity and innovation continues to inspire the Department's mission. He would be proud of those we honor today, Blinken remarked. "We are living and working in an environment today that is more fluid and fraught with complexity than ever before ... [yet] the world is indisputably better off because of your efforts, because of your engagement, because of your leadership."

Without the power of American diplomacy, the world would be a much darker place, Blinken stated. "I have more confidence than ever before in each and every one of you [representing] the absolute best and brightest of our diplomatic corps. Every day, without pomp, without fanfare, you make progress possible on our highest priorities."

In concluding, the deputy secretary shared concrete examples of several awardees' accomplishments, underscoring the performances of Foreign Service nationals. He said FSNs are the "lifeblood of our missions, who keep them running and keep them connected in extraordinary ways to the local community... Our FSN awards are a symbol of what is truly heartfelt gratitude and recognition of the work and sacrifices of locally Employed Staff."

Brandi N. James
Andrew Young
Jesse C. Thomas Jr.
Michael D. Cavey
Wagih H. Ibrahim
Gina B. Kassem
Brian A. Nichols
Matthew W. Barzun
William A. Walters, M.D.

Thomas S. Engle
David E. Lindwall
Dawn F. Scott
Hashomi Sriyanga
Carlisle R. Davis
Yvane L. Loveland
Mickie A. Crume
Zachary V. Harkenrider
Sami M. Mirza

Philip Hayes
William B. Gannon
Deyanira Desouza
Sasso Mohamed Sasso
Wanda Wan-yi Yang
Nana Kiknadze
Fady K. Hafez
Araceli Partearroyo
Trisha M. Chilimbi

Mary C. Phee
Rebecca C. Raman
Walter R. Miller
Jason P. Meeks
Charles C. Martin
Timothy P. Lattimer
Brian P. Tyers
Rick A. Ruth
Michael J. Dzingleski

Jorge R. Alonso
Michelle A. LaBonte
Kristine D'Alesandro
Michael A. Hoffman
Paul V. Bruning
Katherine A. Munchmeyer
Alex D. Greenstein
Cheryl L. Harris
Kimberly A. Gahan
Robert Rochowiak
Katherine M. Diop
David Ian Hopper

Tap on names for picture and citation

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



Award for Excellence in Labor Diplomacy

Brandi N. James

In recognition of excellent reporting on labor developments, as well as innovative programming recommendations to assist unions, federations and partners in developing their capacity to protect workers' rights in the southern Africa region.



James A. Baker, III Award for Outstanding Deputy Chief of Mission

Andrew Young

For extraordinary leadership as both chargé d'affaires and DCM during three terrorist attacks in Bamako, skillful coordination of multiple interagency engagements, inspiring mentorship of entry-level officers, and the promotion of morale and community relations at a high-threat post.



Robert C. Bannerman DS Employee of the Year Award

Jesse C. Thomas Jr.

For leadership and steadfast commitment to the safety of the U.S. Mission community and American citizens during a volatile year of political transition in Burkina Faso that saw a coup d'état, historic elections and a terrorist attack.

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



Chief Financial Officer's Award
for Distinction in Public Finance

Michael D. Cavey (Domestic)

For superb leadership, creativity and innovation in planning, justifying, securing and managing the financial resources that support a safe, prosperous and democratic Western Hemisphere.



Chief Financial Officer's Award
for Distinction in Public Finance

Wagih H. Ibrahim (Overseas)

In recognition of outstanding interagency financial management efforts to achieve Mission Iraq's top priorities by supporting DOD's Operation Inherent Resolve, and resolving major banking and disbursing issues by creatively working to streamline and improve financial operations despite the difficult operational environment.



Warren Christopher Award for
Outstanding Achievement in
Civilian Security

Gina B. Kassem

For exceptional performance in leading efforts to meet President Obama's directive to resettle 10,000 Syrian refugees to the United States as well as thousands of other refugees from the Middle East.

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



Charles E. Cobb Jr. Award for
Initiative and Success in Trade
Development

Brian A. Nichols

In recognition of exceptional
efforts to promote trade, protect
American commercial interests
and increase prosperity through
his tireless commercial advocacy
in Peru.
(no photo)



Sue M. Cobb Award for
Exemplary Diplomatic Service

Matthew W. Barzun

In recognition and gratitude for
years of exemplary diplomatic
service to the United States,
passion and commitment to
promoting American values
and ideals, and dedication to
developing the next generation of
career Foreign Service officers.
(stand-in for award recipient)



Contracting Officer
Representative (COR) of the Year
Award

William A. Walters, M.D.

In recognition of exemplary
service as a contracting officer's
representative in support of the
operational medicine program
for FY15. His exemplary service
and expertise were critical to the
Department's security and Ebola
efforts and reflect great credit
upon him, the Bureau of Medical
Services and the Department of
State.

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



Cordell Hull Award for
Economic Achievement by
Senior Officers

Thomas S. Engle

For outstanding results in
defending and expanding the
U.S. Open Skies framework.



Ryan C. Crocker Award for
Outstanding Leadership in
Expeditionary Diplomacy

David E. Lindwall

For exceptional leadership
in ensuring Embassy Kabul's
effective operations and the
stability of Afghanistan's
government in 2015–2016.
(stand-in for award recipient)



Director General's Award for
Excellence in Human Resources

Dawn F. Scott (Foreign Service)

For her leadership in vastly
improving the HR section of
Embassy Kabul and the morale
of the entire community in
support of mission goals.

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



Director General's Award for
Excellence in Human Resources

Hashomi Sriyanga (LES)

For sustained excellence in the
delivery of human resources
services to Mission Iraq during a
critical period, 2014–2016.



Director General's Award For
Impact And Originality in
Reporting

Carlisle R. Davis

For extraordinary reporting on
China's North Korea policy and
pivotal role in advancing U.S.
efforts to denuclearize North
Korea.



Mary L. Dubose Civil Service
Secretary of the Year Award

Yvane L. Loveland

For exemplary service to the
Bureau of Energy Resources that
extended well beyond the call of
duty and was performed with
exceptional professionalism and
collegiality.

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



Foreign Service Office
Management Specialist of the
Year Award

Mickie A. Crume

For extraordinary support and dedication to the Regional Security Office, official community and American citizens during the March 22 terrorist attacks in Brussels, Belgium, and for improvement of office operations and major contributions to the Tri-Mission Visitor Access program ensuring the security integrity of more than 7,000 visitors.



James Clement Dunn Award for
Excellence

Zachary V. Harkenrider

For leadership, diplomacy and perseverance in reopening Consulate General Lahore, and for vision in advancing critical national security foreign policy objectives. His leadership and management of the consulate were exemplary and serves as a model for the future leaders of the Department of State.



FSN Financial Management
Award

Sami M. Mirza

In recognition of more than 33 years of exemplary service with Embassy Beirut, including 32 years in the financial section. Despite suffering severe injuries in the 1984 embassy bombing, his selfless and faithful service has saved U.S. taxpayer resources, helped save lives during evacuations and resulted in Department-wide financial process innovations.
(no photo)

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



David E. Foy Memorial Award for Excellence in Facility Management

Philip Hayes

For superior leadership and unparalleled composure in the face of adversity in the performance of his duties as facility manager at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, which resulted in significant improvements to the life safety, security and morale of mission staff.



Equal Employment Opportunity Award

William B. Gannon

For outstanding leadership in promoting EEO awareness, specifically in the realm of gender equality issues, and for serving as a role model, mentor and dedicated promoter of EEO rights both within Mission Chile and externally with the government of Chile.



Foreign Service Construction Engineer of the Year Award

Deyanira Desouza

For sustained distinguished service and exemplary performance, superior leadership, attention to detail, innovative practices and proactive security management of the Bishkek New Embassy Compound project; her construction management program was a flagship operation for OBO.

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



FSN of the Year, AF
(Department-wide)

Sasso Mohamed Sasso

For extraordinary dedication to the welfare of American citizens and their family members, outstanding liaison with Djiboutian officials on their behalf, and embodiment of the excellence and importance of Locally Employed staff to U.S. missions abroad.



EAP Bureau

Wanda Wan-yi Yang

For superb performance as the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) liaison to the arts community and management of cultural programs; she strengthened AIT's engagement with local partners and achieved U.S. policy goals, including promoting human rights, expanding youth engagement and building linkages with underserved communities.



EUR Bureau

Nana Kiknadze

For strategic vision combating Kremlin propaganda in Georgia's information space, helping the government of Georgia develop strategic communications capacity and consolidating Georgia's democratization through innovative media diplomacy that significantly advanced the DOS-USAID Joint Regional Strategy for a "Europe whole, free and at peace."

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



NEA Bureau

Fady K. Hafez

For courageous performance as U.S. Embassy Beirut's senior political advisor to advance key U.S. interests in Lebanon from degrading Daesh to countering Hezbollah.



WHA Bureau

Araceli Partearroyo

For outstanding leadership in bringing together U.S. and Mexican universities, private sector partners and government agencies to significantly increase bilateral academic exchanges.



SCA Bureau

Trisha M. Chilimbi

For outstanding contributions toward implementing the U.S.–India Civil Nuclear Agreement.

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



Robert C. Frasure Memorial Award

Mary C. Phee

For leadership, creativity, unflagging energy and diplomatic ingenuity in successfully pressing South Sudan's government and opposition to sign and implement the August 2015 peace agreement, which brought an end to 20 months of vicious conflict in the world's youngest country and laid the groundwork for a better life for all citizens of South Sudan.



General Services Officer of the Year

Rebecca C. Raman

In recognition of her creativity, initiative and leadership as Embassy Phnom Penh's supervisory general services officer, resulting in strong accountability, incredible cost savings and dramatically improved efficiency for the U.S. government.



Inaugural Award for Excellence in Multilateral Diplomacy

Walter R. Miller

For sustained excellence in advancing U.S. interests at the United Nations, particularly on Syria, Libya and Middle East peace; for perceptively teaching U.S. Mission personnel U.N. tradecraft; and for representing the United States with poise and skill in the Security Council.

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



Leamon R. Hunt Award for
Management Excellence

Jason P. Meeks

In recognition of his outstanding leadership and brave service as a member of U.S. Embassy Ouagadougou. In the midst of countrywide civil unrest, a horrific terrorist attack and historic elections, he consistently remained resolute and ensured excellent customer service to all Americans and local staff members.



Linguist of the Year Award

Charles C. Martin

For extraordinary Russian language and public diplomacy skills, and for tirelessly communicating positive, accurate messages about the United States in a challenging media environment.



Frank E. Loy Award for
Environmental Diplomacy

Timothy P. Lattimer

For extraordinary leadership in bringing environmental issues to the core of U.S. diplomacy.

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



Thomas Morrison Information Management Award

Brian P. Tyers

For managing the Libya External Office's (LEO, aka Embassy Tripoli's) expeditionary communications needs on a variety of traditional and nontraditional information management platforms and helping plan its eventual return to Libya while simultaneously serving as Embassy Tunis' and LEO's full-service information services officer.



Edward R. Murrow Award for Excellence in Public Diplomacy

Rick A. Ruth

For building and shaping educational and cultural exchanges in advancement of U.S. foreign policy.



Post Occupational and Safety Health Officer of the Year Award (POSHO)

Michael J. Dzingleski

For exemplary performance in implementing an effective Safety, Health, and Environmental Management (SHEM) program at Embassy Bangkok.

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



Haydee Martinez Memorial
Award for Outstanding Post
Occupational Safety and Health
Officer Assistant (A/POSHO)

Jorge R. Alonso

For outstanding endeavors to build a comprehensive, well-structured and effective SHEM program that continually focuses on empowering the community with continuous training, a broad community outreach effort and creative solutions in Kabul, Afghanistan.



Arnold L. Raphael Memorial
Award

Michelle A. LaBonte

For excellence in creating systemic professional development opportunities for developing the skills and potential of subordinates.
(stand-in for award recipient)



L. Nicholas Ruwe Eligible Family
Member of the Year Award

Kristine D'Alesandro

With creativity and energy, she coordinated Embassy Hanoi's advocacy for the rights of LGBTI individuals, persons with disabilities, and women and girls. Her leadership helped persuade the Vietnamese government to decriminalize gay marriage, led to new rights for transgender persons, and empowered disabled youth and young women.

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



Mary A. Ryan Award for
Outstanding Public Service

Michael A. Hoffman

As director of the Department of State's New York Passport Agency, Michael Alan Hoffman carried forth Ambassador Mary Ryan's legacy of public servant leadership. The standards by which he led his staff in delivering passport services far exceeded and reshaped the public's expectations about government services.



Herbert Salzman Award for
Excellence in International
Economic Performance

Paul V. Bruning

For saving Iraq from fiscal meltdown by guiding the Iraqi government to a \$5.4 billion IMF Stand-by Arrangement, a \$2.7 billion FMF loan and more than \$4 billion in World Bank Development Policy Loans, and for developing and negotiating the Mosul Dam repair plan. His efforts had unprecedented impact on Iraq's economy and brought great credit to the United States.



Luther I. Replogle Award for
Management Improvement

Katherine A. Munchmeyer

With vision, creativity and passion, she transformed the training platform of the School of Language Studies (FSI), thus ensuring that diplomats receive the best foreign language training and increase their effectiveness in representing the United States abroad.

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



Rockwell Anthony Schnabel
Award for Advancing U.S.-EU
Relations

Alex D. Greenstein

For sustained outstanding performance in rebuilding transatlantic relations on data privacy and surveillance following the unauthorized disclosure of classified information concerning U.S. intelligence activities.
(no photo)



Sean Smith Innovation in the Use
of Technology Award

Cheryl L. Harris

In recognition of her vision and skill in using existing technology to revolutionize how the Office of Entry Level Career Development manages positions and directs assignments for the newest members of the Service. Your efforts have created a more efficient, user-friendly system that produces more accurate data on assignment trends.



Secretary's Award for Excellence
in International Security Affairs

Kimberly A. Gahan

For providing extraordinary legal advice that was indispensable to the successful negotiation and implementation of the historic Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action among the P5+1 and Iran.

2016 Bureau Award Winners Citations



Special Agent Daniel E.
O'Connor Memorial Award

Robert Rochowiak

For sustained distinguished service and exemplary performance, superior leadership, attention to detail, innovative practices and proactive security management of the Mbabane New Embassy Compound project; his construction management program was a flagship operation for OBO.



Swanee Hunt Award for
Advancing Women's Role in
Policy Formulation

Katherine M. Diop

For dedication and empowering Ethiopian women and combating gender-based violence through the creative use of public diplomacy programs and inspiring all sections and agencies at Embassy Addis Ababa to work together toward these common goals.



Barbara M. Watson Award for
Consular Excellence

David Ian Hopper

For superior management of Amman's consular section in maintaining a high quality of service to local customers and American citizens while also facilitating the applications of thousands of displaced Syrian and third-country visa applicants unable to apply in their own country due to the civil war.

2016 *Foreign Service Nationals of the Year*

Meeting challenges with aplomb and pizzazz

By Michael Hahn, associate editor, *State Magazine*

The Department's 2016 selection of extraordinary, award-winning FSNs once again proved what is widely known throughout State: Without the dedication and professionalism of local employees at U.S. Missions abroad, our diplomatic efforts and effectiveness would be sorely diminished. The contacts, access and insights they bring to their activities, such as expediting a local procurement, arranging a meeting with the prime minister, recruiting exchange program participants and analyzing economic data, are essential yet easily taken for granted.

This group of six LE staff members, one from each geographic bureau, has consistently turned in exceptional performances over the years, exemplifying the behind-the-scenes work that goes on daily at posts worldwide. They have proven to be highly resourceful, dependable and innovative, engaged at the highest levels at post and respected by their host-country government and nongovernmental leaders. These sketches of accomplishment, drawn from the write-ups provided by their supervisors, show why the praise and accolades are so well-deserved.



Sasso Mohamed Sasso (AF)

Foreign Service national investigator, U.S. Embassy Djibouti

When conflict escalated into civil war in the Arabian Peninsula in 2015, thousands of people fled Aden and other ports along Yemen's coast, seeking safety in the African coastal nation of Djibouti. They amassed in Djibouti City's port, overwhelming local authorities. Sasso Mohamed Sasso, a member of Embassy Djibouti's regional security office, was present too, to assist American citizens caught up in the sudden exodus. In the first two months alone of the conflict, more than 3,000 Americans left Yemen for Djibouti, and their first point of contact with the embassy was Sasso.

In the consular team's words justifying Sasso's award, "The chaotic port scene was only manageable ... because of [his] adaptability and fine-tuned sense of the various equities between the embassy and Djiboutian port and immigration officials." His liaison work was a key factor in boosting the consular section's issuance of visas to more than 7,000 immigrants seeking refuge in the United States; the backlog of Yemenis awaiting adjudication was reduced by more than 60 percent. By being such a go-to presence at the port, he freed consular staff to do the backup paperwork and provide needed services. Sasso joined the RSO team in 2004 as a local guard. In 2012, he was promoted to his current position as FSN investigator. The recipient of many embassy awards, Sasso "embodies the excellence of our mission staff," wrote nominating officer Brian Sells. "This award means pride and honor for my country, my embassy colleagues, my family and myself," Sasso said. He also praised the strong teamwork between embassy sections throughout the Yemen crisis, at a time "when we all needed to pull together to assist our neighbors," and will always remember it as the most satisfying experience in his professional life. "Djibouti is one of the biggest allies the United States has in Africa," he added. "My hope is that the good ties will help bring more jobs to my people and peace in the region."



Fady Hafez (NEA)

Political advisor, U.S. Embassy Beirut, Lebanon

Over the past year, ISIS and al-Nusra terrorist forces repeatedly attacked the Lebanese army along its border with Syria. Suicide bombings in Beirut in November 2015 brought the threat closer to home. It killed or wounded nearly 300 people, most of them shoppers. Meanwhile, the country had to contend with the largest civil unrest since the Cedar Revolution in 2005.

Keeping track of every political ember in this volatile tinderbox is not a job duty for the faint of heart. But for Fady Hafez, Embassy Beirut's senior political adviser, with nearly 30 years of work for the U.S. government, it has been both exciting and necessary. "Providing my colleagues and

Washington with the most up-to-date information and policy guidance on Lebanon's never-ending political and existential crises helps foster an environment for dialogue, maybe even resolution," he said. His supervisors, including the ambassador, turn to Hafez for advice on crafting messages that advance U.S. policy interests. In the case of recent violent protests, his nuanced approach—ensuring that U.S. diplomats sided neither with the government nor the opposition—paved the way for the United States to play a role in reducing tensions.

Similarly, he is trusted by Lebanese interlocutors. When a group of parliamentarians visited Washington, D.C., last year, he prepped them on their meetings with Congress, which had the potential of exacerbating bilateral tensions over the topic of Hezbollah. That this was avoided is testament to his steady guidance and good judgment.

"The most challenging time for me was the July 2006 war between Hezbollah and Israel," Hafez recalled. "We had to evacuate more than 15,000 Americans who were either visiting or living in Lebanon. It was an extremely painful period and we thought the embassy would close, but it turned out the American flag remained present throughout in Lebanon."

Hafez's modesty belies his commitment and tenacity. "My selection was wonderful news, but to be honest I was not expecting it. It gives me additional incentives to achieve even better," he said. His supervisors, including Chargé Richard Jones, were unambiguous: Hafez is the most "dedicated, hard-working and knowledgeable" LE staff member with whom they have had the privilege to work.



Trisha Chilimbi (SCA)

Economic specialist, U.S. Consulate General Mumbai, India

When Trisha Chilimbi joined the U.S. Consulate in Mumbai in 2004, one of the major points of friction in bilateral relations was nuclear energy policy. Her background in research and the drafting of analytical reports for an Indian think tank made her the right candidate for the economic position that was advertised; however, to be effective, she had to get up to speed on highly technical and complex issues that went beyond plain economic analysis.

The announcement of a landmark agreement by then President George W. Bush and former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in July 2005 signaled a new era of cooperation in U.S.-India civil nuclear energy. Chilimbi was relatively new at her job but was already rebuilding estranged ties between both nations' nuclear energy establishments. In short order, Chilimbi mastered her portfolio and her reporting. Of her reporting, a supervisor said, "Senior policymakers and technical experts throughout the Washington interagency have hung on Trisha's every word." She continued to provide invaluable input to briefing papers on Indian nuclear agencies' positions in advance of President Obama's discussions with Indian officials in 2014 and 2015.

Chilimbi is proud of her ties to America. Many relatives have settled there, including her brother and his family. She said she loves to visit the United States, her favorite place for vacation, but she also loves Mumbai. "Despite its many faults, it is my home," she observed. "I met my husband there and his family is also from Mumbai."

Meanwhile, the breakthrough agreement she worked on has spawned other protocols, including assurances for American energy companies interested in billion-dollar commercial deals; as confidence between both countries grows in this sector, Chilimbi's supervisors are unanimous—none of this would have been possible without her.

Wanda Yang (EAP)

Cultural affairs assistant, American Institute in Taiwan



Though the United States maintains no official diplomatic relations with Taiwan, U.S. policy of strong ties to the island and its people have been constant since 1979. An important part of this relationship is reflected in educational exchanges and cultural programs sponsored by the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) and its public diplomacy office, where Wanda Yang works.

She joined AIT's public affairs team in 2010 with a background in arts management and as a cultural impresario, a perfect match. She was cited for her dedication and creative energy, nurturing of contacts and turning routine programs into spectacular events. Last year she coordinated the week long American Music Abroad program. This consisted of large-scale public concerts as well as targeted outreach and workshops for independent musicians, students, disabled persons and female victims of trafficking, violence, domestic abuse and unfair labor practices. Yang said she took great pride in arranging for the artists to perform at the Garden of Hope, an NGO that shelters these at-risk women.

For the Daniel Pearl World Music Day, which Yang has coordinated for the last seven years, she planned and organized the free, daylong concerts with performances by more than a dozen local and foreign music groups. The event attracted thousands and provided "a unique outreach cultural opportunity to convey core American values," her supervisor wrote. Also cited were her encyclopedic knowledge of Taiwan's cultural scene and her focused programs on tolerance and equality, including LGBT issues, a major political topic in Taiwan.

Yang relishes her role as a bridge between the U.S. and Taiwan. "If I can do anything to keep the dialogue between peoples around these shared values evolving, that is what makes my job worthwhile," she said. She sees cultural diplomacy as especially vital for the post to build a fresh brand name among Taiwan's young generation. "We are helping encourage people in Taiwan to pursue the values that lead to a progressive civil society with respect for diversity and equal human rights," she added. Yang is especially grateful to her colleagues and supervisors for their guidance and support. "This award should be presented to them."



Nana Kiknadze (EUR)

Information assistant, U.S. Embassy Tbilisi, Georgia

Nana Kiknadze joined the U.S. Embassy in Tbilisi in 2000 at a time when her country was struggling with independence from the former Soviet Union, and when civil unrest would unleash the Rose Revolution and a glimmer of hope for pro-Western democratic reforms. Russia's invasion of Georgia in 2008 and subsequent tensions between both countries still cloud Georgians' future, creating a turbulent backdrop for Kiknadze's work. "I've always had a sincere feeling for what the United States does for my country," she said. "U.S. Mission goals support Georgia's aspirations to join Western civilization as a member of the European family."

As the public affairs section's press assistant, Kiknadze has promoted initiatives to raise journalistic standards in Georgia. For her award, she was commended for three initiatives in particular: a media literacy program for journalists in ethnic minority areas; a program for Georgia's public broadcaster to air newscasts in ethnic minority languages; and teaching citizen journalism to ethnic minority youth in underserved regions of the country. Information Officer Dan Hastings said Kiknadze's policy instincts in fashioning programs to counter Russian propaganda were nothing less than brilliant. Reducing the appeal of the Kremlin's narrative in Georgia is the ultimate goal. "Nana has been at the tip of the spear advancing this emerging U.S. foreign policy priority," he wrote.

Kiknadze provides information and advice on all media-related events to senior officials, including the ambassador. She attributes her reporter's news instincts and resoluteness to the skill set she learned working for major U.S. media outlets, including The New York Times and Newsweek, before joining the embassy. "As their researcher and 'fixer' in the Caucasus, I learned to appreciate high standards in journalism." She has also clearly learned the urgency of defending her country's aspirations and the paramount role the United States continues to play.

Araceli Partearroyo (WHA)

Senior academic affairs specialist, U.S. Embassy Mexico City



As senior cultural specialist in one of the busiest and most demanding posts worldwide, Mexico City, Araceli Partearroyo put to good use her 39 years of U.S. government service when she was tasked with implementing an agreement by both countries' presidents in 2013. The agreement would vastly expand opportunities for U.S.-Mexico academic exchanges and joint research, promote new university partnerships and target underserved populations. But, while the Mexican government was willing to fund its share of these initiatives, the U.S. side brought limited additional monies to the table.

This did not deter her. With her decades-long experience in the educational field, her breadth of contacts and ability to craft a strategy were impressive. She helped organize high-level visits to Mexico and stimulate interest on the part of hundreds of U.S. post secondary institutions. Those institutions saw the benefit of cross-border cooperation, broadening their networks and student base, and were willing to ante up.

Her efforts paid off. More than 100 new university linkage programs were launched and five U.S. universities are now opening offices in Mexico. On both sides of the Rio Grande, the number of exchange students has increased between 15 and 20 percent. The ultimate objective, according to a 2015 joint statement by both governments, is to “develop a 21st century workforce for our mutual economic prosperity and our sustainable social development.” Partearroyo understood that diversity and inclusion would make all this more meaningful. She helped link Native American studies programs in the United States with indigenous students in Mexico and organized a U.S. study tour for rectors of seven indigenous universities in Mexico. “We owe all our success in the area of academic exchange to Araceli’s vision, her network of contacts, her personal diplomacy and her sheer hard work,” wrote her supervisors.

For her part, Partearroyo said her most gratifying reward is when she receives progress reports and emails—hundreds of them—from students of different backgrounds on their return to Mexico or at different stages in their lives. “Then I know I contributed something and can feel proud alongside my colleagues that we are dream makers,” she said.

Help in Haiti

In hurricane's wake, task force seeks U.S. citizens

By Faith Kroeker-Maus, vice consul, U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince

When Category 4 Hurricane Matthew hit Haiti on Oct. 4, it became clear that many U.S. citizens would be stranded and needing support. At any given time, U.S. citizens live and work throughout Haiti on missionary work or study trips, or visiting family. While some have lived in Haiti for years, others come and go for a few weeks—the product of the many exchanges between Haitian and American sister churches, cities and community groups.

Although I'm a consular officer at Embassy Port-au-Prince, I was enjoying the weekend in New York when Hurricane Matthew hit. After the embassy declared an authorized departure, it soon became clear I would be away from Haiti for a while. Feeling useless in the face of impending disaster, I contacted the Bureau of Consular Affairs and learned of the need for help on the Hurricane Matthew Consular Task Force in Washington, D.C. I jumped at this opportunity to put my Creole language skills and country knowledge to use to help U.S. citizens affected by this devastating storm.

The Consular Task Force members in Washington responded to public inquiries about U.S. citizens affected by the storm and the U.S. government's relief efforts. Assisting U.S. citizens after the hurricane was incredibly difficult since, for the first 72 hours, communications links were down in much of Haiti's southwestern region, the area most affected by the storm.

During this time, the task force updated airport information and travel advisories on travel.state.gov and put out press releases and disseminated security messages to U.S. citizens issued by post. We also answered phone calls from concerned individuals seeking information about their U.S. citizen loved ones in Haiti. The cooperation between the task force and post gave a break to the tired Port-au-Prince consular officers who were working long hours and sleeping at the embassy.

| Cont. 1 of 4 | ▾



Scene from Port-au-Prince as Hurricane Matthew makes landfall in Haiti.

Photo by Logan Abassi/UN

As cell phone service slowly began to be restored in the region, the task force learned that many U.S. and Haitian citizens were stuck in precarious situations, lacking shelter, food and water. We also heard stories of resiliency and ingenuity, as Americans and Haitians worked together despite overwhelming odds, embodying the Haitian Creole proverb *chita pa bay*, or “sitting around won’t get you anywhere.”

In one case, eight U.S. citizens were forced to shelter at an orphanage with more than 200 people on a small island off the southern coast of mainland Haiti. Friends of this group of stranded Americans contacted the task force to report that the group had only two days’ worth of food and that one member of the group was insulin-dependent and was low on medicine. With its boat broken, the group had no way to escape.

The task force responded, reporting the group’s situation to consular officers at the embassy, who then contacted the group directly and gave them information about private airline and helicopter evacuations. With the help of local residents, the group fixed the boat and the consular officers worked with other colleagues to find a Coast Guard cutter; the cutter then radioed the group and kept in touch until the boat safely reached the mainland.

This interagency cooperation resulted in the group’s safe evacuation to a location

with needed medicine and provisions.

“We were very concerned about this group of Americans, as they were situated in a remote area and extremely low on supplies,” Port-au-Prince Consular Officer Robert Blanco noted. “So we had to get creative to quickly find a way to reach them. Fortunately, we have great interagency colleagues at post and everyone was more than willing to share resources ... We were very happy to see this case end well.”

During the crisis, the task force also answered phone calls from members of Congress seeking information about their constituents. In one instance, a member’s office sought to learn the status of a group of missionaries who were stranded on their compound in a mountainous, rural area. The missionaries were caring for more than 1,000 Haitians who had no food and were running out of water. The task force and consular officers at post reached out to the group, providing updates on road and security conditions nearby.

The missionaries reported that 95 percent of neighboring homes were destroyed and that nearby villages were several feet under water. The group had barely been able to remove all of the children from the building housing its orphanage before the structure was destroyed by winds. Aided by the consular officers’ information, the group was able to depart the area and return to the United States. The task force also passed this information to the USAID Hurricane Matthew Disaster Assistance Response Team, which was leading the U.S. government’s efforts to deliver emergency relief supplies and humanitarian assistance to communities affected by the storm.

As a task force member, I was proud to contribute to efforts to protect U.S. citizens who were caught up in a desperate situation. Our efforts helped some return home safely and helped others continue their support to Haiti as it recovers.

The experience also taught me that, if a crisis strikes, you don’t have to be in-country to contribute. By joining consular professionals on the task force, I was able to lend a hand, even working at a distance from the disaster in Washington, D.C. ■



Back in Haiti, the author, at center, worked with American Citizens Services officers Brittany Schick, left, and Robert Blanco to close the last remaining welfare and whereabouts cases.

Photo by Kisley Jeannot

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United Front
Embassy coordinates
hurricane response

United Front

Embassy coordinates hurricane response

By Melissa M. Sandoval, economic officer,
U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince

On Oct. 4, 2016, Hurricane Matthew smashed into the southwestern tip of Haiti, the first Category 4 storm to hit the nation in 52 years. Torrential rains and winds of more than 140 miles per hour wrecked coastal areas, displacing an estimated 175,500 people and putting approximately 1.4 million Haitians—13 percent of the country's population—in need of humanitarian assistance. Hurricane Matthew also devastated crops, hotels and other businesses in southern Haiti, where agriculture and tourism are the economic backbone.

Two days earlier, as Matthew first turned toward Haiti and the Haitian government declared a red alert and sought U.S. assistance, the U.S. Mission to Haiti had already begun preparing its response. As Ambassador Peter Mulrean made a

Haitian citizens wash clothes in the Riviere Guinaudee near Grande Anse, the departmental capital city of Jeremie, in western Haiti, Oct. 10, 2016. The region was devastated by Hurricane Matthew on Oct. 4, 2016.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Russ Scalf



Haitians receiving USAID-provided humanitarian assistance.

State Department Photo

disaster declaration, a USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) arrived to coordinate the Embassy Port-au-Prince relief effort. Despite such obstacles as impassable roads, collapsed bridges and humanitarian convoys' security challenges, the mission quickly orchestrated the skills of multiple agencies.

The DART involved staff from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), USAID Haiti and the USAID offices of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) and its Food for Peace program (USAID/FFP). The U.S. military's response, provided early in the U.S. relief effort, was called Joint Task Force-Matthew. It began working around the clock over the next two weeks to deliver supplies and humanitarian personnel from USAID and its partners to hurricane-affected areas via U.S. military aircraft. That created a veritable assembly line that was stockpiling, transporting and delivering assistance to local NGOs and affected Haitians.

During its two-week mission, the U.S. military flew 98 humanitarian flights to hard-to-reach areas, delivered more than 275 metric tons of food and relief supplies, and transported 170 response-critical personnel to 13 communes in Haiti's southwestern peninsula.

As humanitarian agencies on the scene became more able to meet their needs, military assistance was reduced and the task force's mission ended Oct. 19. Nonetheless, the DART continues to work with NGOs as they ramp up their logistical capabilities and to support new joint distributions of food and relief supplies, getting more aid into the hands of those in need. USAID is also working with the Haitian government and its partners to clear roads and debris and facilitate access to more remote areas. The DART and CDC continue to coordinate with international partners to mobilize resources to prevent the spread of cholera and other diseases, and strengthen treatment services.

All told, the U.S. relief effort has involved more than \$53 million in humanitarian funding and is continuing. The embassy also illustrated its solidarity with Haiti, lowering its flags in recognition of the country's mourning.

Although Hurricane Matthew's devastation will be felt for years, Embassy Port-au-Prince's efforts laid a strong foundation for recovery efforts and again demonstrated the U.S. commitment to Haiti and its people. And, by bringing together many mission entities in a united front for hurricane relief, the U.S. Mission was living by the Haitian proverb *men anpil chay pa lou*—"many hands make the load lighter." ■

Background: The Riviere Grande Anse near the city of Jeremie, in the Grande Anse Department of western Haiti was hit hard during Hurricane Matthew. The region is receiving humanitarian assistance from U.S. forces based out of Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Russ Scalf

History's Crossroads

Embassy helps save historic site

By Rose V. Lindgren, foreign affairs officer, Bureau of Near Eastern and Asian Affairs and former cultural affairs officer, U.S. Embassy in Beirut

In the UNESCO-protected Jabal Moussa bio-reserve in Lebanon, an ancient Roman road traverses a region having at least 728 floral species, 25 mammal species and more than 137 bird species. The reserve's Valley of Adonis, which is on the list of tentative UNESCO World Heritage Sites, was once a crossroads for ancient human civilizations, a place containing evidence of human history starting from the Middle Paleolithic period. One scholar sees the valley as a place where all civilization epochs are depicted, "allowing a complete sequence of human history."

It should be no surprise, therefore, that in 2015 a U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) grant from the U.S. Embassy in Beirut has helped the Association for the Protection of Jabal Moussa (APJM) preserve and protect the biosphere's cultural heritage. An outgrowth of that grant was the ambassador's inauguration of a new cultural trail in the Valley of Adonis.

The AFCP supports the preservation of cultural sites and objects and traditional cultural expression in more than 100 developing countries. Grants are awarded in an annual worldwide competition involving projects proposed by the host country and selected by the U.S. Embassy in that nation. Projects can include the restoration of historic buildings, conservation of rare manuscripts and museum collections, preservation and protection of archaeological sites and the documentation of vanishing traditional crafts and indigenous languages. Embassy Beirut's AFCP grants have totaled \$1,100,000 since 2003.



The team cleaned this Roman inscription, at upper left, by clearing away nearby bush and tree limbs, to let the surface receive sunshine.

Photo by Rose V. Lindgren

At the inauguration of the Jabal Moussa project, Ambassador Elizabeth Richard said the mission worked with Lebanon's directorate general of antiquities to identify endangered sites. The post's restoration projects have included the Jeb Jenine Bridge, the Anjar Public Bath, Byblos Citadel and Al Mubarakeh Tower in Old Tyre. "We embraced these projects because of our belief in the importance of preserving, remembering and learning from our shared history," Richard observed.



Gathered at the reserve's entrance are, from left, Lebanon's minister of culture and its minister of administrative reform, APJM's president and Ambassador Elizabeth Richard.

Photo courtesy of APJM

This is not the first U.S. investment in Jabal Moussa. In 2011, the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) supported a project promoting traditional food production and handicrafts there, and in 2012 USAID provided training and equipment for tree nursery improvement under a reforestation initiative. In all, from 2014 to 2016, USAID supported three small grants to promote economic investment in the region, focusing on cherry production, bee cultivation and rural tourism.

By underwriting the creation of a trail along the area's old Roman road, though, Embassy Beirut's latest grant took Jabal Moussa in a new direction. The trail supports the area's cultural heritage to further economic development and local identity. APJM says that 1,422 people had already visited this trail even before its official inauguration, 963 of them under 16 years of age and 342 of them dining at an APJM guesthouse.



The team clears brush and dirt from a site that was found to be about four times as large as initially assumed and probably has another unexplored level below the surface.

Photo courtesy of APJM

The AFCP grant also funded cleaning and restoration of select sites in the biosphere, including those on the Roman road, as well as a temple at Mashnaka and two Roman religious sites, at Qornet el Deir and Qornet el Mzaar.

The Roman road was the path upon which generations of Romans and Ottomans traveled between the Mediterranean and the high plains of Lebanon's interior. Along it are stone inscriptions from the Roman Emperor Hadrian (117CE to 138CE) that were also restored by the AFCP grant for public

viewing. The inscriptions designated several types of trees—cedar, cypress, juniper and oak—as under Emperor Hadrian's protection, explained APJM Project Manager Daniela Doumet, who holds a master's degree in managing archeological sites.

Preserving these ancient inscriptions is particularly urgent because some of them are subject to weathering and erosion, and some have been seen by locals as indicators of the presence of gold. These residents have used dynamite to search for that treasure.

Concerned about human disturbance of the bio-reserve, APJM first installed a small guard shack with flyers and maps for visitors. When villagers burned the shack down, APJM rebuilt it, only to have it vandalized and burned again. Local villagers were upset at the bio-reserve designation because it limited their use of the area for grazing, hunting and planting.

APJM has since won over the villagers by noting the project's benefits and emphasizing economic development activities to provide an alternative to farming and hunting. APJM has trained and employed local youth as guides and now uses the guard shack to sell local jams and spices to visitors. Locals, in turn, helped APJM volunteers find new historic sites and, in a recent local election, a local leader came forth who strongly supports the bio-reserve and APJM.



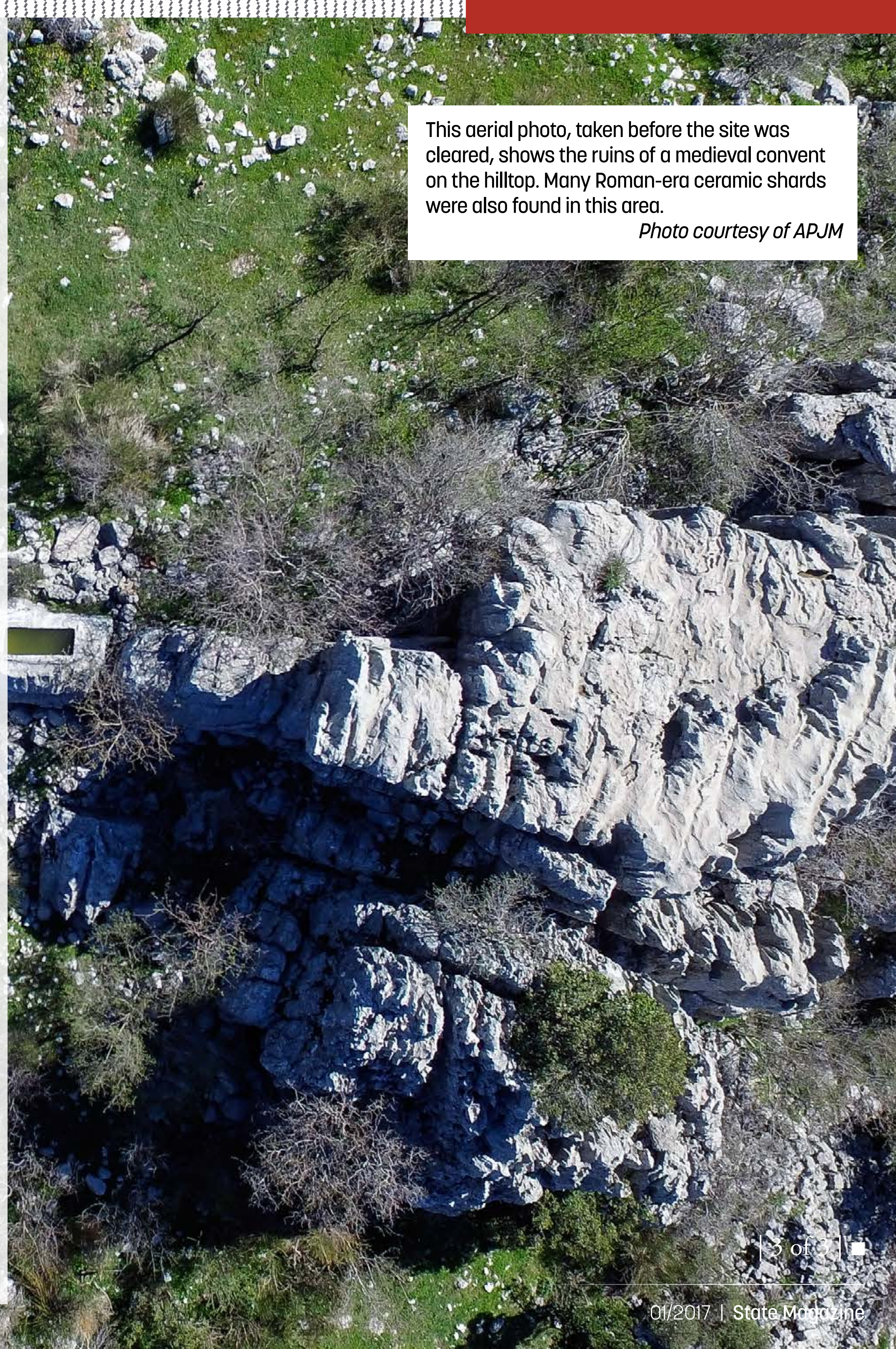
The author visits the Machnaka site during its cleaning and restoration.

Department of State Photo

The world's people want to protect their cultural heritage, and in Lebanon, Embassy Beirut works with the ministry of culture to identify key sites and determine their urgency and importance. In a country where distrust of the government is high among civil society, the strong collaboration among the embassy, ministry and APJM serves as an example for other projects. It also shows the embassy's investment in peace and cultural understanding in this nation. ■

This aerial photo, taken before the site was cleared, shows the ruins of a medieval convent on the hilltop. Many Roman-era ceramic shards were also found in this area.

Photo courtesy of APJM



Volunteerism Abroad

Exceptional individuals honored

By Patricia Linderman, president emerita, Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide



Jennifer Heemstra, far left, takes the stage, preparing to perform for 3,000 youth at an outdoor concert in the Himalayas.

Photo courtesy of Jennifer Heemstra

One provides counseling to Middle Eastern refugees in Turkey. Another founded an NGO to bring classical music to the “invisible people” of Kolkata.

What they have in common is that they are among the six winners of the 2016 Secretary of State Award for Outstanding Volunteerism Abroad (SOSA). The awardees were chosen by representatives from the six geographic bureaus, the Family Liaison Office and the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide (AAFSW), and recognize outstanding volunteer activities by U.S. government employees, family members and members of households serving overseas.

Department employee Ronit Kirshner Gerard and her husband Craig Gerard were co-winners for the AF Bureau. Assigned to Mission Senegal, the Gerards quickly reestablished ties with the village of Fougoulou, where Ronit had previously served as a Peace Corps volunteer. Often staying over in their “mud hut vacation home” after the eight-hour drive from Dakar, the Gerards renovated a two-room schoolhouse, established a year-round vegetable garden and improved hygiene practices. (The community had only 13 toilet facilities for 500 villagers.)

“Fougoulou is my family,” said Ronit. “You do what you can for family.”

The Gerards also spent countless hours volunteering within Mission Senegal, including as members of the employee association board and the Green Team, and organizing sports and recreational activities.

The NGO offering concerts, meanwhile, was the brainchild of concert pianist Jennifer Heemstra, holder of a master’s degree in music from the Cleveland Institute of Music. She founded the Kolkata Classics, which offers concert series, student education programs and no-cost medical assistance fairs. To achieve this, she worked with India’s artists, city officials, business leaders, hospitals and NGOs. Kolkata Classics empowers women, inspires underserved youth and builds cross-cultural bridges through western classical music.

“I want to make the invisible people of the city visible through music,” Heemstra emphasizes.

Since December 2014, Heemstra has organized and performed in more than 60 concerts with university professors, Broadway stars and members of leading orchestras, reaching

| *Cont.* 1 of 3 | ▼



Craig and Ronit Gerard pose with children from Fougoulou village and their own two boys, standing in front of a hand-washing station. *Photo by Matt Jira*

more than 55,000 people. The series' artists perform in settings that range from the Kolkata slums and red-light districts to ornate amphitheaters in the central city. Kolkata Classics also includes a health fair component, enlisting medical volunteers to provide free vaccines, health checks and screenings, and outreach services to women and children.

Another winner, Miriam Engstrom, put her talents to use while posted to Ankara with her husband. Engstrom, who holds a doctorate in clinical psychology and a master's degree in theater, runs a weekly counseling and stress relief group for Iraqi, Afghan and Iranian refugee women. Her group also has a lending library, home-based business development program and a scholarship fund. "For many refugees, living in a kind of post-traumatic limbo can feel empty and the experience dehumanizing," Engstrom observes. "It was my mission to help the women rediscover a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives."

Engstrom also organizes and stages theatrical events centered on women's rights and roles in society. Performances

of her Women4women Productions have included a show called "Love Letters" performed by the British ambassador and his wife. The performances have had hundreds of guests and raised thousands of dollars for local women's charities. She also co-founded the group Refugees Online Learning English, which matches refugees with volunteers via Skype, providing language learning and supportive relationships.

NEA Bureau winner Bob Castro believes "Health is a universal, shared objective." Castro, who accompanied his wife on her assignment to Manama, brokered vital health industry partnerships for the American Mission Hospital of Bahrain and fostered socially responsible business ties across cultures. He did so by leveraging his speaking and convening roles at U.S.-Arab summits in Jeddah and New York, the Kellogg Innovation Network, local Rotary chapters and the American Chamber of Commerce.

"I wanted to sustain the tradition of American missionaries who risked their lives 120 years ago to bring health care to this region," he said.

Castro also created opportunities for international collaboration that will benefit Foreign Service and U.S. military



During Ramadan in June 2016, Miriam Engstrom, front left, joined members of a refugee women's group in Turkey for an iftar potluck in a refugee's apartment. She contributed chili, and the women were thrilled to taste it for the first time. *Photo courtesy of Miriam Engstrom*

family members, including new Chamber of Commerce fellowships that provide increased mission access to its members and partners. In addition, he coached Navy Youth Soccer and mentored referees for local basketball and soccer leagues. | *Cont. 2 of 3* | ▼



The SOSA award winners pose with AAFSW President Dr. Joanna Athanasopoulos Owen, center. *AAFSW photo*

Castro said he chose to work pro bono in order to do “all I could to promote bilateral and regional relations long term, utilizing my talents through public diplomacy.”

Another winner, Farah Vinnedge, holds a master’s degree in education and focused on education-related volunteerism. She has helped schools in Brasilia develop ESL programs, taught English herself, guided teachers in curriculum development, organized library materials and helped students apply for scholarships. “Having been raised in a very poor country with strict cultural restrictions towards education for young women, I fought relentlessly to be educated and realized that no child should have to struggle this hard to obtain the most basic necessity in life,” Vinnedge explained.

Her Chairs for Schools project provided donated desks and chairs to schools and day care centers in impoverished neighborhoods. She also developed a community outreach program that matched volunteers from the private international school with students in underprivileged schools in Brasilia. “It’s very moving to be able to see the students and children flourish in their environment, and to think that I made a positive impact

in their pursuit of an education makes all the difference in the world for me,” Vinnedge reported.

Winner Sofia Blake advised potential volunteers to act quickly, since significant volunteer projects can be hampered by one’s time-limited assignment abroad. During her assignment in Indonesia, Blake set up a grant program enabling local women leaders to carry out one-year community projects. The projects included a new bridge, a village kindergarten and a program to buy recyclables. Blake also set up a mentorship-education program, designed workshops and recruited more than 100 mentors for Indonesian undergraduate and graduate students seeking to study in the United States. Through peer-to-peer mentoring, “many Indonesian women discovered peers and support that will be behind them for years to come,” she observed.

More generally, she sees volunteering as “the most powerful way to connect to a place and its people; the only way to make a place home.”

The SOSA Award was established in 1990 by then Secretary of State James Baker and his wife, Susan Baker, along with AAFSW, the nonprofit volunteer organization for the Foreign Service community.

At the Nov. 10 ceremony, Deputy Secretary of State Heather Higginbottom and AAFSW President Dr. Joanna Athanasopoulos Owen presented the SOSA awards. The ceremony also recognized Lesley Dorman, who passed away this year and had inspired the creation of the Family Liaison Office. The Dorman Award went to June Carmichael for service to AAFSW, while Cindy Jones received the Champions of Eligible Family Member Career Enhancement Award for her achievements at Embassy Budapest. The Eleanor Dodson Tragen Award was given by DACOR to Leah Evans for her support of the Foreign Service community, including as editor of the book “Raising Kids in the Foreign Service.”

To nominate an outstanding volunteer in 2017, contact office@aafsw.org. ■

Home Is Where the Hazards Are

By Joyce Brewer, certified industrial hygienist, certified safety professional, Office of Safety, Health, and Environmental Management

Safety Scene



Accidental injuries or fatalities due to hazards, such as falls, poisoning or drowning, are common in the home. Fortunately, there are steps you can take to decrease the chances of suffering a mishap. Here are some tips to reduce that risk.

Fall-related hazards are the most common cause of injuries in the home. One of every five falls leads to serious trauma, such as a head injury. You are more likely to be at risk if you are older than age 70, based on a combination of factors, including age-related decline in functions—maintaining balance and stability—and the effects of medications. Children 5 years of age or younger are also at a higher risk of falling at home due to such factors as curiosity, underdeveloped motor skills and lack of judgment. Falls can be prevented by increasing the lighting throughout your home and securing carpeting and rugs to eliminate slippage. For example, in the bathroom, ensure rugs have rubber grippers to prevent slips. Also, quickly clean up water spills on the floor. Install safety rails in showers and bathtubs if they're needed to assist users with getting in and out. Stairwells require handrails and adequate lighting. Both stairways and walkways should be clear of clutter that could cause

people to trip and fall. If you have young children, install safety gates at the top of staircases.

Poisoning can happen with everyday chemicals if proper precautions aren't taken to avoid accidental ingestion, inhalation or absorption through the skin. Therefore, read and follow product labels to obtain guidance on recommended storage, proper handling, disposal and first aid. Protect children by storing household chemicals and medications out of their reach (e.g. in a locked cabinet). Additionally, place medications in containers with safety caps. Discard drugs properly when no longer needed or when they reach their expiration date. If poisoning does occur, have emergency local contact numbers available for immediate assistance. In the United States, in addition to dialing 911 in an emergency, you can call the American Association of Poison Control Centers at 1-800-222-1222.

The risk of toddlers drowning in swimming pools can best be avoided by installing an effective pool barrier and supervising this high-risk age group whenever they are inside the pool. Swimming pools should be equipped with self-latching, self-closing gates and be surrounded by nonclimbable barriers that keep out unsupervised children. Children near pools must be supervised by an adult, and rescue equipment needs to be close by. Replace missing or broken drain covers, as they increase the risk of someone being trapped underwater due to suction from the pool drain. Be sure to have your pool regularly maintained, so that its safety features are in proper operation. It is also important to learn how to swim.

In the home, it's crucial to be aware of room-specific hazards. For example, in the kitchen, positioning chairs and step stools away from the stove can prevent young children from getting burned. Household safety checklists can help you do a home hazard assessment. The New York State Department of Health's "Home Safe Home: A Home Safety Checklist," for instance, is a useful resource. More information and assistance can be found through such sources as the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). ■

THE STATE OF SANTA AT STATE

WHERE DO WE STAND ON THE
NAUGHTY OR NICE DECISION
MEMO?

IT'S CLASSIFIED
SECRET SANTA...



STRATEGIC SNOWMAN AFFAIRS
NEEDS TO GET THIS CLEARED BY
SPECIAL ENVOY FROSTY!

AUGUST 2016



REINDEER AFFAIRS GOT A
DASHER AND DANCER
CLEARANCE, BUT WE'LL NEED
TO RUN IT BY DONNER
AND BLITZEN!



WHAT ABOUT THE DEPUTY
ASSISTANT ELF FOR GLOBAL
MERRIMENT?

WE NEED TO
GET THE FINAL
WORD
FROM S!



HO HO HO!

THAT'S HIS
ANSWER TO
EVERYTHING...

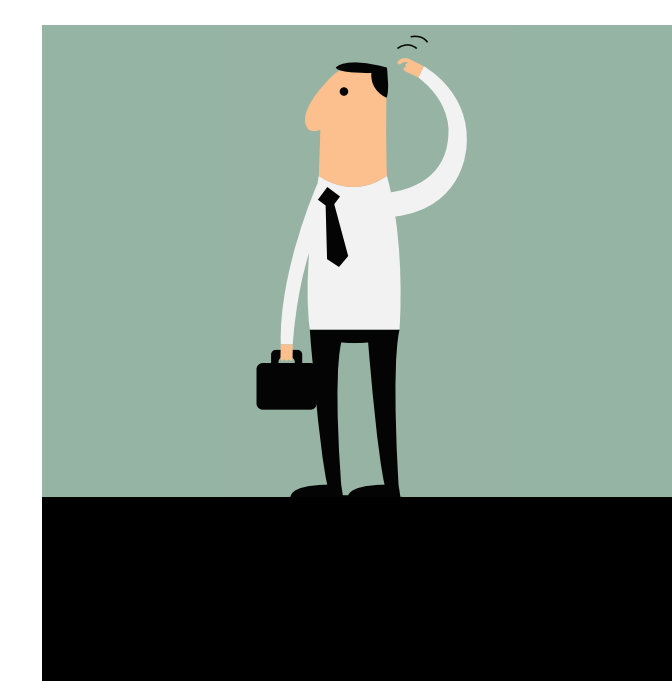
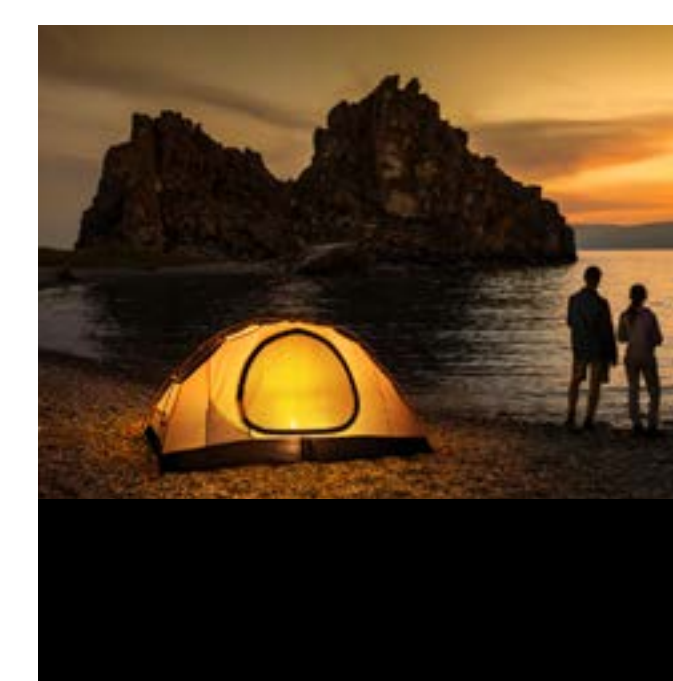
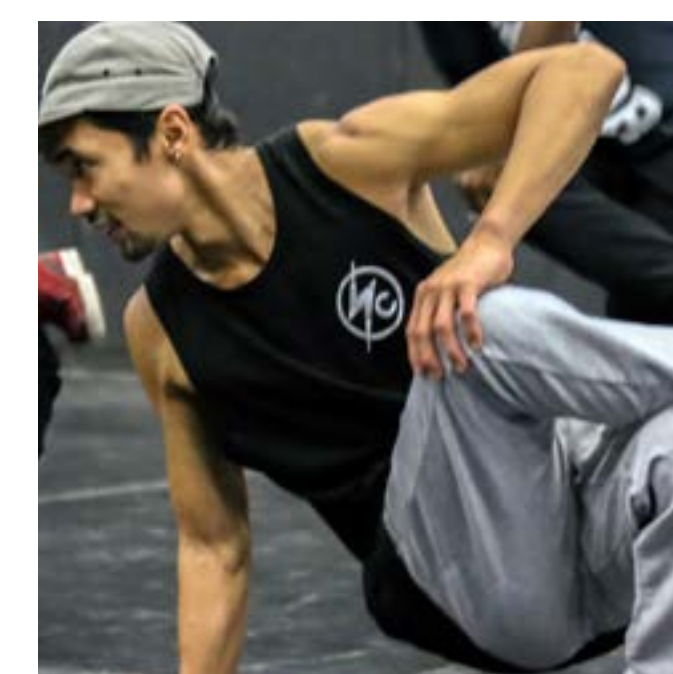


Academics Visit U.S. Universities

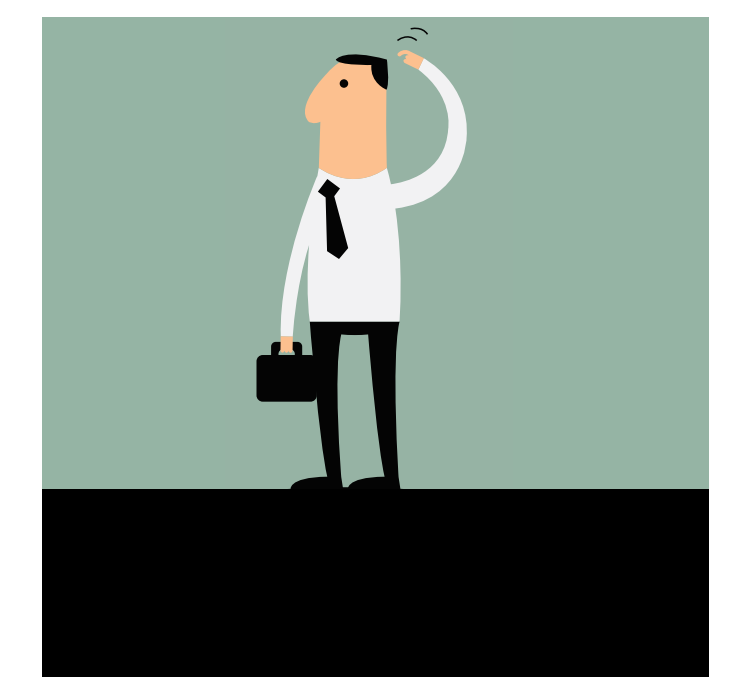
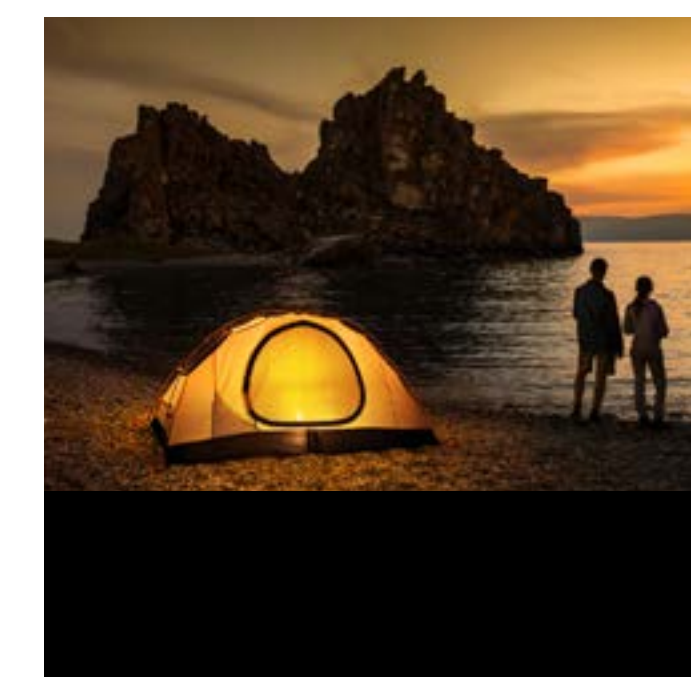
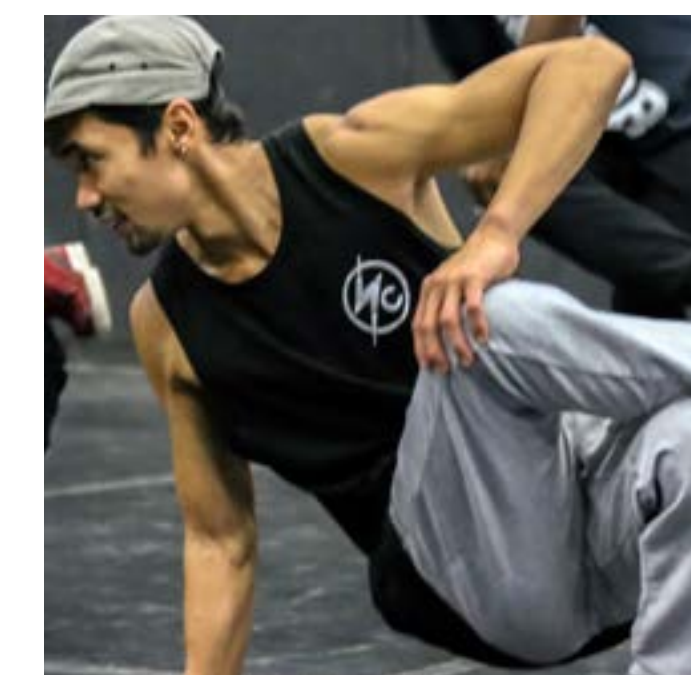


Eight Russian academics who recently completed a two-week visit of writing centers at universities in Denver, Indianapolis and Boston pose for a group photo at Tufts University. The International Visitor Leadership Program-sponsored tour came as Russian scholars feel pressure to publish in internationally peer-reviewed journals, but lack the skills to write effectively in academic English. To address this, the U.S. Embassy in Moscow has worked closely with the participants of this program, helping them launch a consortium of writing centers throughout Russia. ■

Photo by Suzanne Ginsburg



Post Promotes U.S. Commercial Presence



In October, as part of the embassy's Discover America Week programming, U.S. Ambassador to Bahrain William Roebuck, center, cut a ceremonial cake prior to touring several U.S. franchises. The event highlighted the breadth of America's commercial presence in Bahrain. ■

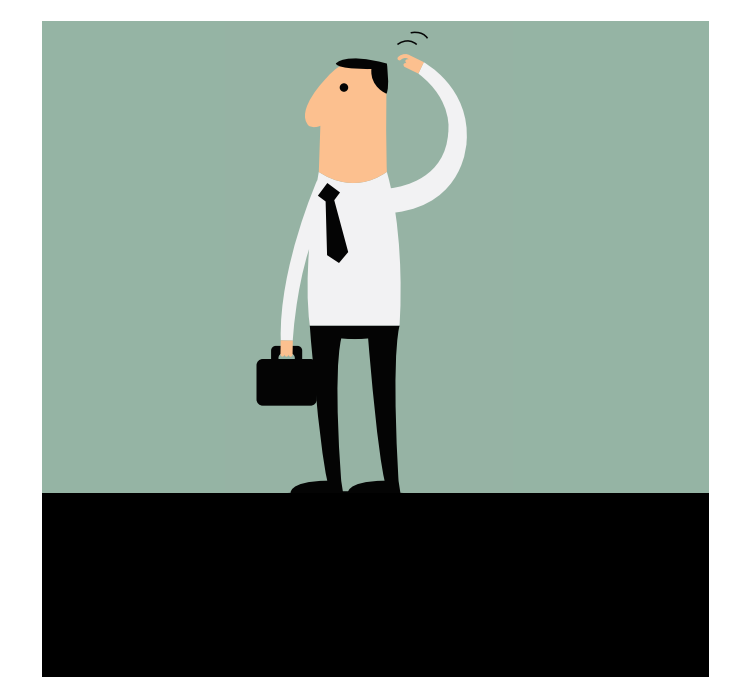
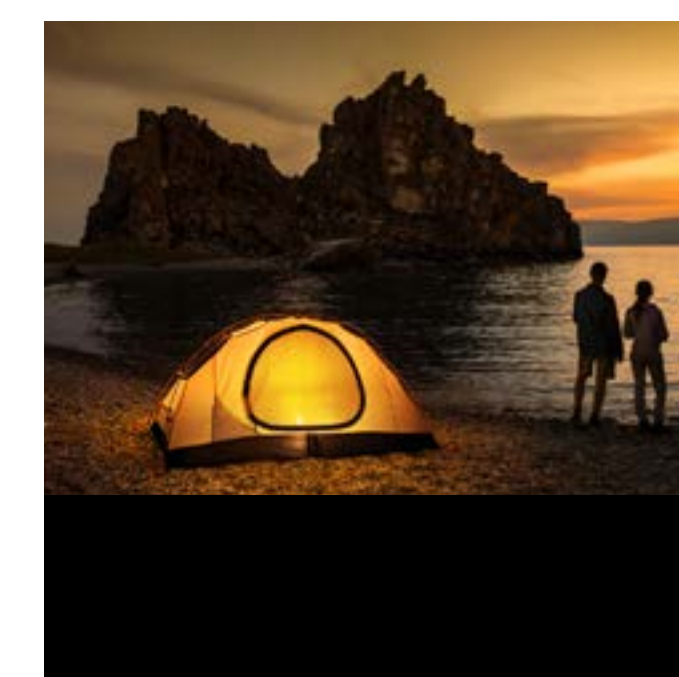
Photo by Helen Concepcion

Dancer's Visit is Youth Outreach



The break dancer known as B-Boy Ronnie Abaldonado busts a move during his visit to Jordan to participate in a number of embassy programs focused on reaching youth. He conducted workshops for local break dancers and offered motivational talks outside the capital, at Al-Aman Youth Center and Our Lady of the Mountain Orphanage in Anjarah. In his performance, he joined forces with a local dance ensemble, bringing together a diverse group of youths who practice positive self-expression through dance. ■

Photo by Embassy Amman

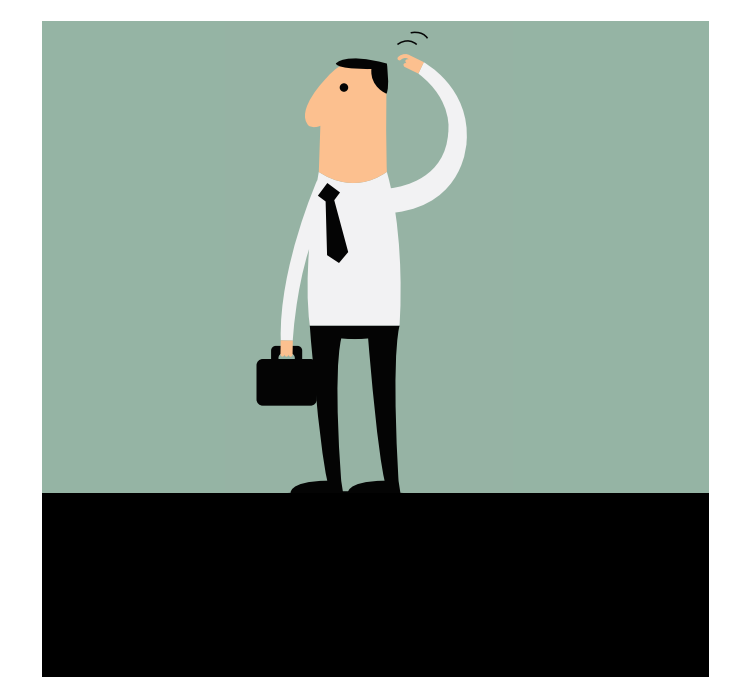
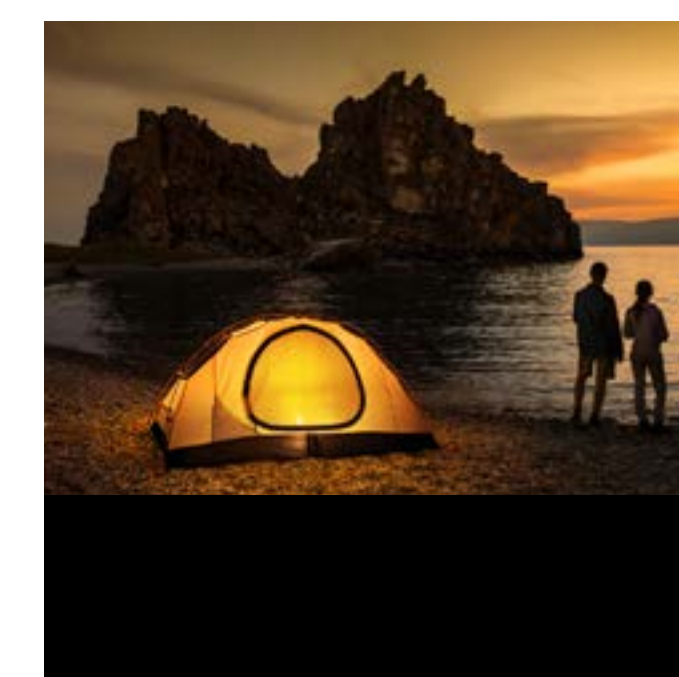


Retirement Ceremony Held in D.C.



Under Secretary for Management Patrick Kennedy, left, congratulates one of the more than 190 employees who retired during 2016 and were honored at the Department of State retirement ceremony in November, in Washington, D.C. ■

Photo by Michael Gross

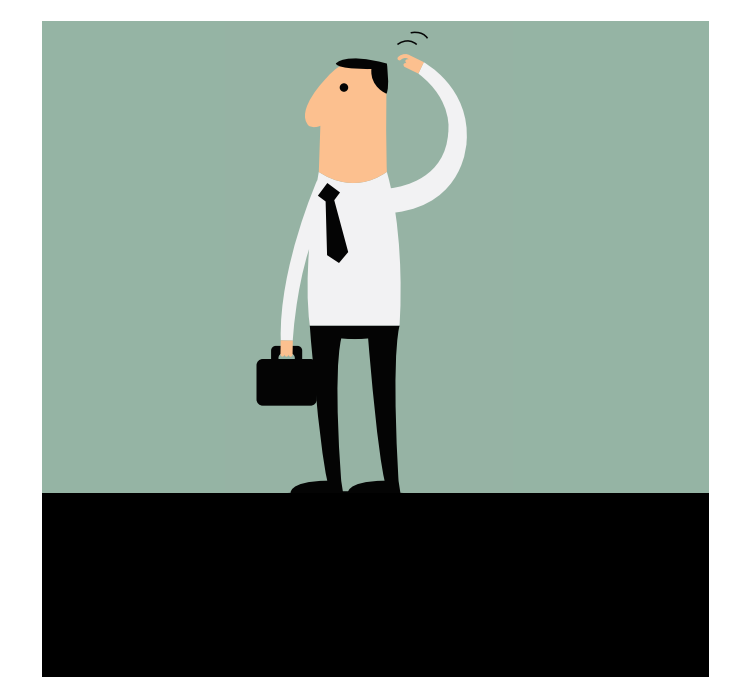
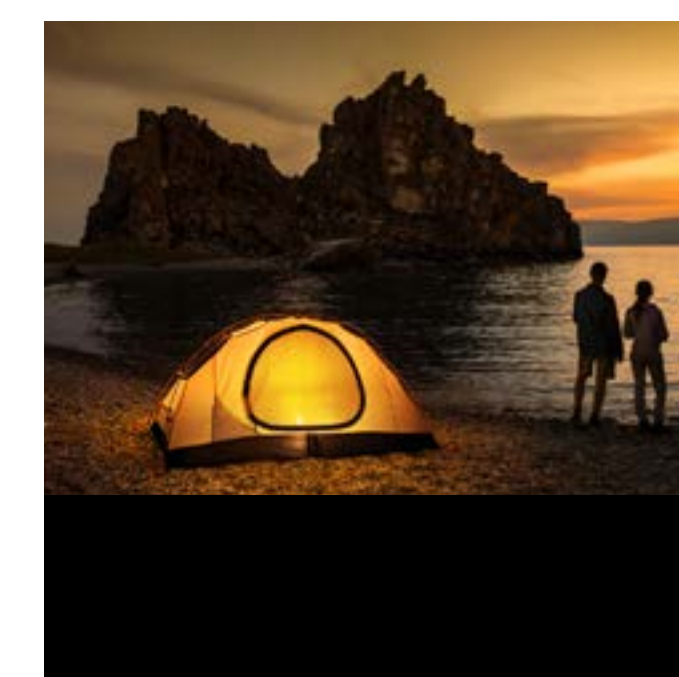


IO Presents Award



Bureau of International Organization Affairs Assistant Secretary Sheba Crocker, at right, and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Tracey Jacobson congratulate Walter Miller in November as the first recipient of the Excellence in Multilateral Diplomacy Award. ■

Photo by the Bureau of International Organization Affairs

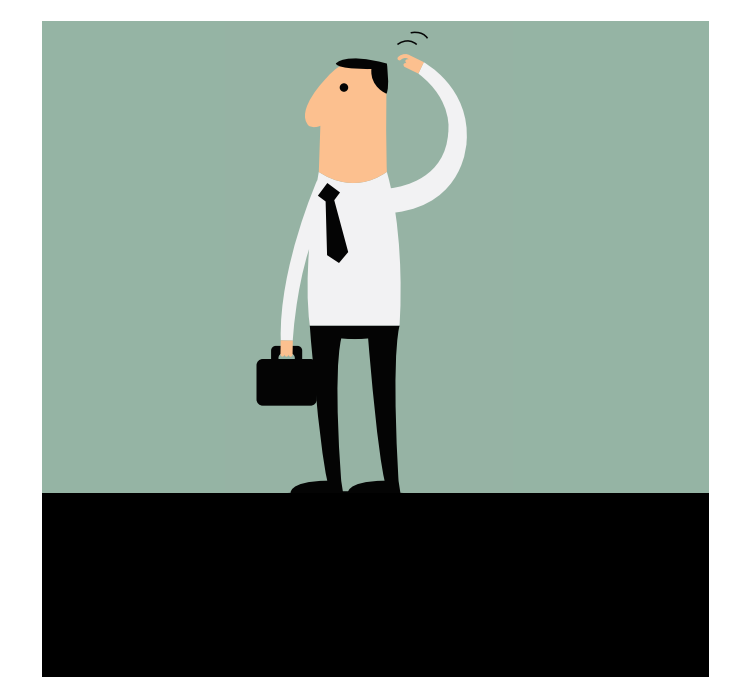
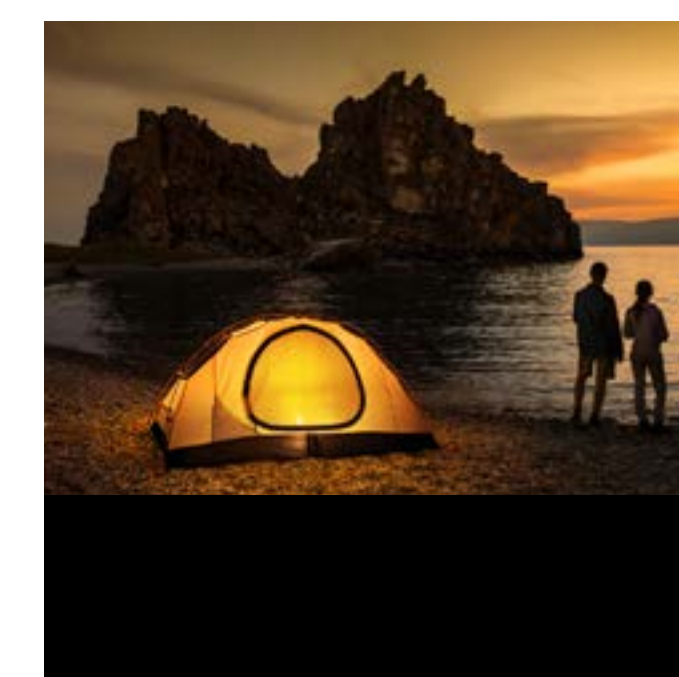


Access Students Celebrate Halloween



At the American Center in Kulob, Tajikistan, students from the Department's English language Access program joined other students to learn about Halloween and don appropriate costumes, even becoming mummies. ■

Photo by Abdulhamid Sharipov



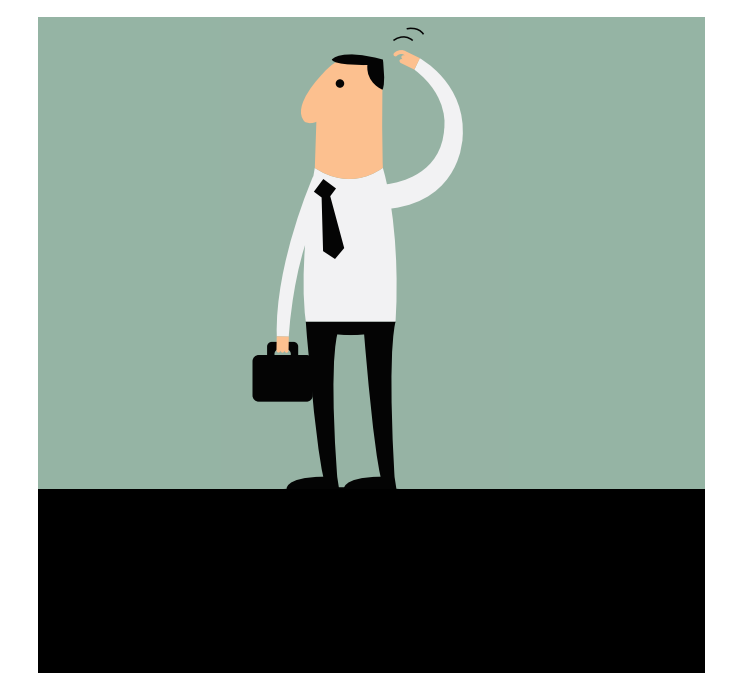
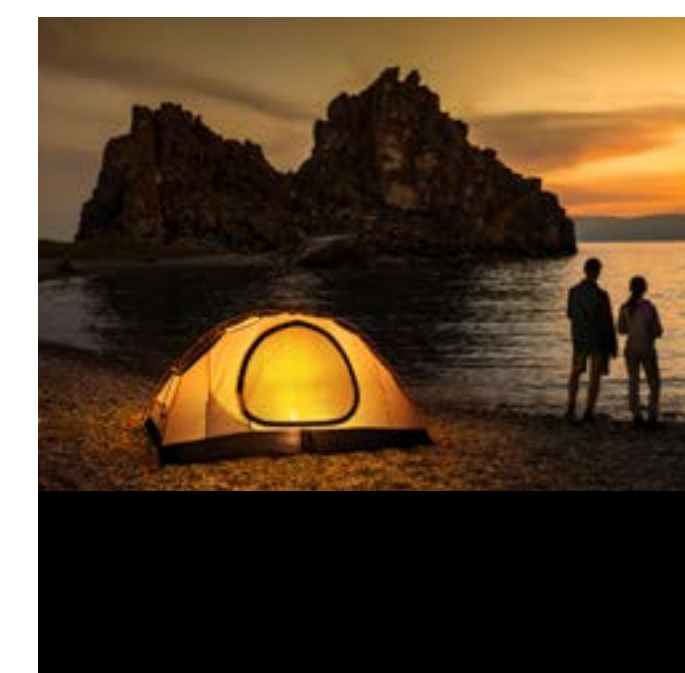
Ethics Answers

Q: I am a domestic office director and would like to send an email to my whole bureau inviting everyone to participate in a 5-kilometer fundraiser race to support a nonprofit organization for which my spouse serves as an officer. The organization's mission is focused on autism research, and my co-workers and I have often talked about my daughter's struggles with autism. Am I allowed to send an email to bureau employees inviting them to participate in this event?

A: This is a great question that raises some important concerns under the ethics rules. First, employees should not use government resources to send an email to the bureau for a personal fundraising event. Second, the Combined Federal Campaign prohibits fundraising in the workplace for charities. Third, as the email would be directed at a larger group, including your subordinates, questions could be raised regarding whether participation was voluntary, due to a subordinate-supervisor relationship. Finally, as this involves an organization with which you have a personal connection through your spouse's work and your child's health, sending this invitation could be viewed as showing a preference for this organization over others.

Ultimately, due to ethics concerns, you should not send such an email to bureau employees.

Ethics Answers presents hypothetical ethical scenarios Department employees might face. For help with real ethics questions, email EthicsAttorneyMailbox@state.gov.



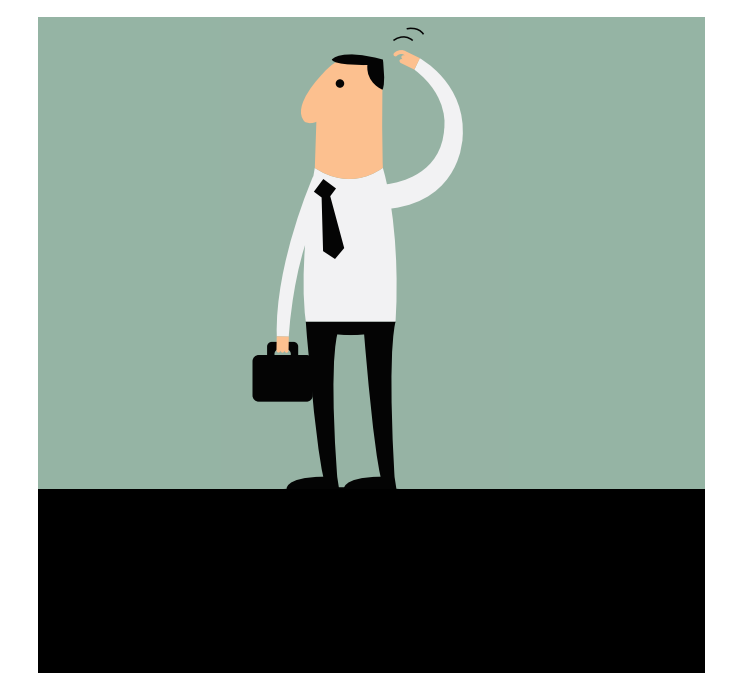
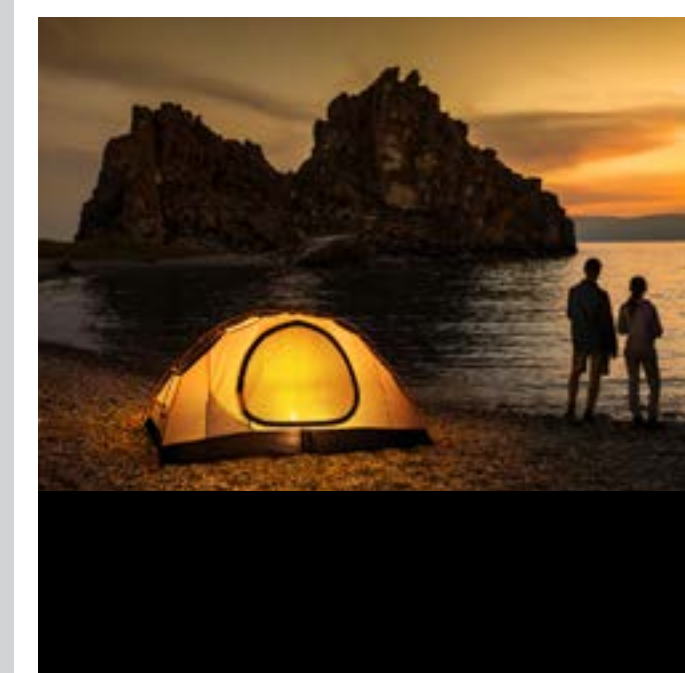
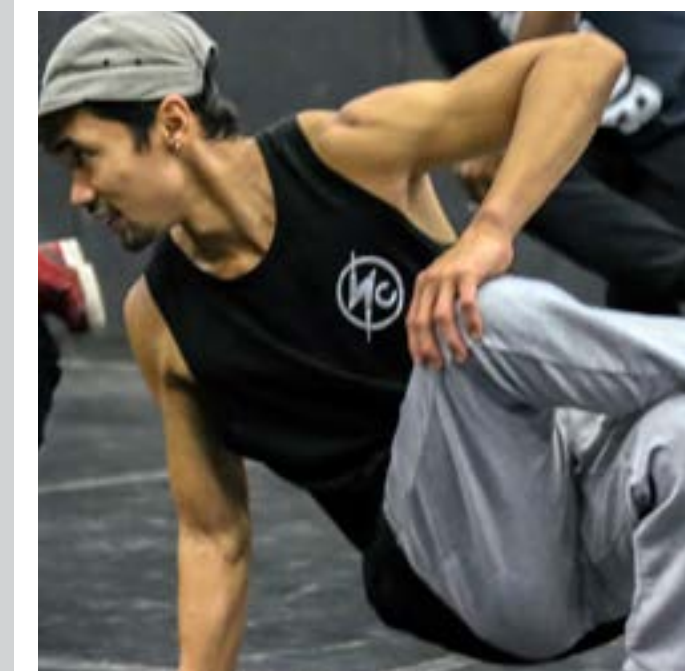
Retirements

Civil Service

Adams, Brenda N.
 Alonzo, Stephen F.
 Butcher, Horace Edward
 Butler, Ella S.
 Chun, Jinny
 Dickey, Marilyn
 Ford, Vernelle Cain
 Hannon, Katherine E.
 Herington, Thomas M.
 Johnson, Jacqueline S.
 Kwong, Ralph S.
 Lamplugh, Marianne E.
 Leroy, Stephan L.
 McElroy, Larry L.
 Mulvaney, Ann E.
 Page, Scott W.
 Phillips, Owen Dacosta
 Rollins, Shearita Marie
 Siman, Emile S.
 Simms, Deborah Ann
 Simpson, Karen J.
 Smith, Krystyna S.
 Stanley, Lorie T.
 Woodard, Debra C.

Foreign Service

Blair, Donna M.
 Castillo, David
 Cates, Clara Pando
 Davenport, Joanne M.
 Davenport, Paul Russell
 Donahue, Bruce E.
 Hall, Daniel J.
 Jaworski, Richard E.
 Katterson, Meredith Kay
 Pauli, Rosemarie
 Sawyer, Gwendolyn A.
 Stern, Marjorie A.
 Steyer, Thomas G.
 White, Sharon Nancy



In Memoriam

Churchill

Ledbetter

Lewis

Meininger

O'Brien

Perrin

Rand

Silberstein

Sinnott

Wax

Questions concerning employee deaths should be directed to the Office of Casualty Assistance at (202) 736-4302. Inquiries concerning deaths of retired employees should be directed to the Office of Retirement at (202) 261-8960. For specific questions on submitting an obituary, please contact Ed Warner at warneres@state.gov or (202) 663-1688.



In Memoriam

Joy Churchill



Joy Churchill, 89, a retired FSO, died Oct. 9 in her hometown of Portland, Ore., from complications of congestive heart failure. She served initially as a secretary and in administrative support, and was posted to embassies in Belgium, Greece and Turkey. In 1973, she enrolled in the Mustang Program for the advancement of women and minorities and attained a college degree, fluency in Spanish and appointment as an FSO, followed by postings to Argentina, Hong Kong, Mexico and the Philippines. She retired in 1988, moved from Virginia to Oregon and pursued her love of travel, a vibrant social life and cats.



In Memoriam

Edwin Dwight Ledbetter



Edwin Dwight Ledbetter, 92, a retired FSO, died Oct. 22 in Placitas, N.M. A B-17 pilot during World War II, he was shot down over France, held under German occupation and later awarded a Purple Heart and Bronze Star. After earning a Harvard Law School degree and practicing briefly in California, he joined the Department and served at posts in Frankfurt, Guayaquil, Athens, Nicosia, Tegucigalpa, Soc Trang (Vietnam) and Panama City. He left the Service in 1976 and enjoyed 40 years of retirement. In October 2013 he was awarded the prestigious French Legion of Honor by the French consul general in San Francisco.



In Memoriam

Robert A. Lewis



Robert A. Lewis, 95, a retired FSO, died Oct. 12 in his home in Niantic, Conn. He served in the Marine Corps during World War II, joining the Department in 1947 first as a diplomatic courier and then with postings to Athens, Le Havre, Paris, Seoul and Saigon, where he was consul general. He retired in 1975, was an avid reader and loved boating and visiting with friends. Until a few days before he passed, he was doing the KenKen puzzle in The New York Times.



In Memoriam

Vernon “Ray” Meininger



Vernon “Ray” Meininger, 66, a retired FSO, died unexpectedly Nov. 4 in Freetown, Sierra Leone, where he was living and working with his wife Laurie. He volunteered for the Army in 1968, served in Vietnam and worked in hospital administration and facilities management before they joined the Department. His posts included the Marshall Islands, Cameroon, Guyana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Romania, Iraq, Central African Republic and Sierra Leone, where, after retiring from the Service in 2015, he was consulting with the U.N. on rehabilitating health care centers that had been devastated by the Ebola outbreak.



In Memoriam

Robert P. “OB” O’Brien



Robert P. “OB” O’Brien, 72, a retired FSO, died Oct. 20 in Dennis, Mass. He served in the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War and was a Marine Security Guard at U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur. He joined the Department as a diplomatic security officer in 1972 with postings in Vientiane, Beirut, Manila, Cairo and London. He was head of protective details for several secretaries of state and director of the DS Training Center. He retired in 2000 and followed his wife, Gerri, to her Foreign Service appointments in London, Ankara and New Delhi. In 2011, they returned to East Dennis to enjoy the relaxing surroundings of Cape Cod.



In Memoriam

James Perrin



James Perrin, 86, a retired FSO, died Sept. 17 in Falmouth, Maine. After a career as a singer, stage manager and TV network producer, he joined USIA in 1966. He served at posts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Spain and France. In Washington, D.C., he was deputy director of the agency's Film and Television Service. He retired in 1990. Outside of music and the theater, his main interests were bridge, photography and fishing. He was particularly proud of the Perrin Fellowship he established in 2006 at the Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter, N.H.



In Memoriam

S. Richard Rand



S. Richard Rand, 87, a retired FSO, died Sept. 30 in Fernandina Beach, Fla. He joined the Department in 1962 and served at posts in Marseille, Paris, Vientiane, Bern, Hamilton (Bermuda) and Bangkok, where he was consul general. While in Laos, during the height of the Vietnam War, he served as the U.S. government's principal coordinator for POW/MIA affairs for Southeast Asia. He retired in 1988. An avid recreational fisherman, he was an excellent cook and loved preparing gourmet meals for family and friends.



In Memoriam

Manuel Silberstein

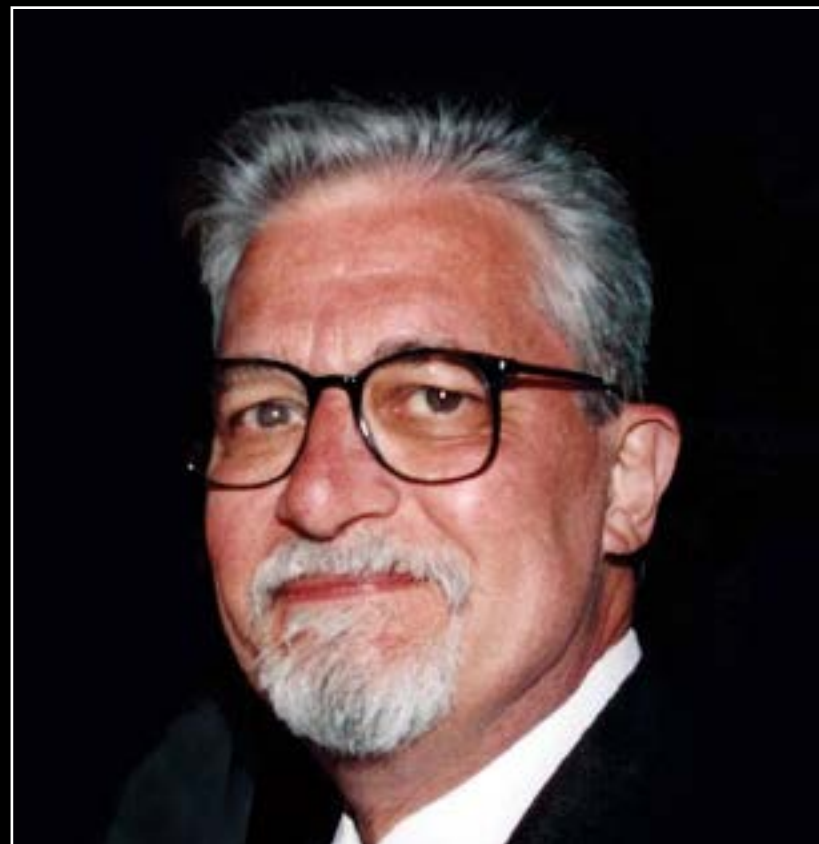


Manuel Silberstein, 90, a retired FSO, died Oct. 3 in Washington, D.C. He served in the Army at the end of World War II and joined the Department in 1951. His overseas posts included India, Austria, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Pakistan and Brazil before retiring in 1985. He continued to serve on the Foreign Service Grievance Staff, ran his own landscape design business and was a docent for the Smithsonian's Sackler/Freer Galleries of Asian Art.



In Memoriam

Christopher Sinnott



Christopher Sinnott, 77, a retired FS information management specialist, died Sept. 23 in Rome, Italy, with his wife beside him. He served in the Army from 1960–1964, joined the Department in 1965 and soon after married Monika in Brazil. Together they explored the world for 48 years. His assignments included posts in Moscow, Taipei, Lima, Alexandria, Vienna, Algiers, Buenos Aires, Valletta, Paris and Rome before retiring in 2004. He enjoyed both the simpler and finer things in life. His passions live on in his photographs, his wife, daughter, son, brother and all who knew him.



In Memoriam

Jean Catherine Wax



Jean Catherine Wax, 80, a retired FS office management specialist, died Sept. 23 at home in Amado, Ariz., of liver cancer. A graduate of Montana State University in Bozeman, she joined the Department in 1981 and served at posts in Togo, Somalia, Germany, Mexico and Canada before retiring in 2000. She was active in the Tucson and Green Valley Weavers' Guilds and was a volunteer at the Tubac Presidio.



End State

A diver explores a portion of coral reef lining a steep ocean wall in the Bay of Pigs near Playa Giron. Cuba has some of the healthiest marine environments in the Caribbean due to extensive government-sponsored preservation efforts.

Photo by Isaac D. Pacheco